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**The Psychology and Philosophy
Of
Emanuel Swedenborg**

**by
Horatio W. Dresser**

VOLUME 2

**Edited and with an introduction by
John S. Haller, Jr.**

Part Two

Doctrinal Principles and Values

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Part Two

Doctrinal Principles and Values

Introduction

We saw at the outset of this inquiry that the system before us belongs to a period of rationalism in psychology when it was still customary to compass the whole field of the inner life. Today, we consider one precinct at a time, limiting our inquiry to its particular facts and laws. Thus, psychology stops far short of a view of personality in all its phases. Opinions concerning the soul are left to religion. Final issues are relegated to metaphysics. Vision, apparitions, telepathy, mediumship and kindred phenomena are referred for investigation to specialists interested in psychical phenomena. Since all matters of a psychical nature are supposedly subject to misconceptions from the start, the inquiry must be searchingly acute. Whatever issues remain unexplored when psychical research has done its work may well be classed under the head of abnormal psychology. Meanwhile, the religious aspect of all experiences bordering on mysticism properly belongs to the psychology of religion. Not many students of these branches of psychology are sufficiently acquainted with the whole field to undertake a reconstruction. So, the world of inquiry is left without any conception of reality to guide the seeker for truth to an integrating philosophy.

In the present doctrine, a comprehensive view of human personality is implied from the first. To make our way through regions where the illusions are said to be abundant, it is highly

important to keep this view before us, bearing in mind the doctrine of the spirit with its inherent functions, the idea of Divine life within all these functions, and remembering that sense-experiences do not afford a sufficient clue to any of the realities of the inner life. Consciousness as the term is ordinarily used, is not, we have seen, a sufficient guide. The term “self,” seldom used, also falls far short of a unifying view. Spiritual perception, rather than self-consciousness, is still the central idea. Even if we should adopt any idea of the unconscious or subconscious now in vogue, the conception of personality would fall short. Frederic William Henry Myers’ hypothesis of the subliminal self would bring us much nearer our goal; since his theory of a more extensive self below the threshold of ordinary awareness was especially formulated to aid in the description and explanation of those experiences which, lying on the mysterious border between the two worlds, seems to unite us with the spiritual world. But even with this theory of experience as our guide, mental life would be mostly limited to the sphere of the exterior memory, in contrast with the doctrine of the interior memory, which implies a deeper center of spiritual reality. To bear this deeper center in mind as our objective is to regard the human spirit as involving the two worlds, with a distinctive doctrine to guard us against fallacies and falsities. Meanwhile, each of us is gathering the experiences of life in the natural world which in essence, at least, will survive bodily death in a more enduring sense of the world than survival as regarded by Myers.* While we know so little by experience about spheres lying beyond the border, what we do know and what we can supplement by spiritual doctrine, is of far greater moment than what psychology has thus far told us about the human mind.

* Dresser is referring to Frederick William Henry Myers (1843-1901), one of the founding members of the Society for Psychical Research in 1883. His research into the unconscious mind, the subliminal self, and the *metetherial* world have been documented in Trevor Hamilton’s *Immortal Longings: F.W.J. Myers and the Victorian Search for Life After Death* (2009); Jeffrey J. Kripal’s *Authors of the Impossible: The Paranormal and the Sacred* (2010); and Janet Oppenheim’s *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850-1914* (1988).

There is no reason then for excluding from our inquiry as mostly psychological those experiences which specialists have set apart as involving psychical phenomena. Nor need we hold over for another inquiry the experiences which imply the moral law, moral obligation, freedom, responsibility, and conscience. Certainly we cannot neglect prayer, repentance, regeneration, or even the problems of evil and sin, insofar as these issues refer to personality as a whole. Instead of adopting the prevailing distinctions between psychology, ethics, religion, social psychology, and philosophy, we shall continue to be guided by the principles of correspondences and degrees; for our concern is with those inner relationships which connect man with his fellows in groups that, in turn, involve still larger groups in the spiritual world. We need not then try to force all our facts into a certain pattern, neglecting those that apparently have no place in our scale or on our curve; nor need we succumb to the current tendency to reduce all matters to quantitative terms to the neglect of quality. For the doctrine of degrees is especially concerned with qualitative distinctions. Our seer left behind in his scientific period all attempts to reduce higher phenomena to the requirements of a special science, when he gave up the effort to find the soul by appeal to anatomy, physiology, and the theory of psychology then prevailing. After his illumination he did not square his new results by the old. His later psychology is a persistent protest against all such attempts. Some readers will steadily disagree with his new findings because their whole thought is departmental, because he exceeds their categories and passes from the sphere of precise evidence, as they regard, it into what are called the obscurities of the psychical world. But our interest is to hear him through without judgments that rule out any of his data or neglect any of his principles. For this is explicitly a psychology of obscure states. Swedenborg keenly realizes that his readers are groping where, for him, everything is so clear that he is as much at home in the spiritual world as in the natural. Hence, he makes straight

the pathway of thought from the sphere of the better known to the less known, by describing spiritual states and spheres, explaining sleep and dreams, and tracing the relationship between earthly and heavenly occupations.

Taking Swedenborg at his word, we shall proceed on the principle that there are various types of religious experience and religious people, including the mystics, and that a distinction should be drawn between so-called eccentric inner states—such as visions, auditions, and revelations—and the outcome or value of religious experience seen in its larger context. A man who is called a mystic, seer, or visionary by his neighbors and critics may promulgate teachings of great significance, teachings which neither stand nor fall by his visions. If it seems necessary to discount his visions by making allowances for his temperament, the present doctrine affords the central clue. But the doctrinal deliverances made by such a seer can be compared with other teachings and with the inner meaning of the Bible. Thus, we may single out those principles which bear the test of time.

It would be impossible to complete the exposition of our seer's psychology without at least a brief inquiry into the meaning of his own states. For him, the spiritual world of his twenty-nine years of experience in later life was profoundly real, as unmistakably so as the natural world in which he regularly fulfilled civic functions so well that scarcely anyone knew he also lived in an exceptional world of inner experience. It has been customary to assume that he could not have had a real criterion, merely because he was a "visionary." Thus, the fact has been ignored that his psychology is also a psychology of his own states, and those of anyone known as a mystic or visionary. This is also a social psychology in which personal experience is, for the most part, discounted, and that the social psychology is tested by appeal to certain teachings of Scripture having to do with the pilgrimage of the soul during its entire history on earth.

Swedenborg emerges from his tentative years of transition from his scientific period to the period of his illumination with a system of doctrine which neither stands nor falls by his own experiences. Hence, he is not primarily what Kant calls a “spirit-seer.” He does not countenance spiritism in any form. Despite verbal resemblances to mystical doctrines and symbolisms, his thought is a type of spiritual rationalism. Many of his doctrines turn upon an argument by elaborate references to scriptural texts, without appeal to any teaching akin to mysticism. What concerns us, therefore, is not the mere psychology of an alleged spirit-seer, mystic, or visionary, as if Swedenborg were totally explained by the psychology of his visions. We are concerned with a man who, despite all obscurities in the intermediate world of such experiences as those that perplex psychical people of all schools, sincerely believes he is disclosing to his readers what is real, true, and enduring—when this intermediate realm has been transcended.

Our interest, therefore, is impartial exposition, with a view to fair-minded interpretation. We accordingly reserve the right to make excursions into the land of dreams, visions, and spirits; and to return with our psychology intact. The inquiry, as we marked it out in the beginning, will also lead to a consideration of such apparently remote matters as the spiritual origin of disease and the nature of hell; for we are concerned with the whole individual in relation to the entire assemblage of spheres and inner states.

The chief points to bear in mind, when comparing this doctrine with any real psychology (sharply distinguished from both ethics and religion) are these: (1) the inseparability of good and evil, and truth and error from states of the inner life (no true psychology without ethics and religion); (2) the fact that human nature, as such, is once and for all an inferior degree (no true psychology without a study of what in this doctrine is known as *proprium*); (3) the determinateness of *this life* with reference to what can be reformed and what cannot be reformed

in the “other” life (no true psychology with knowledge of the essentials and contrasts of regeneration); (4) the emphasis on the *structure* of the human self, with reference to the primacy of self-love, the trend toward hell, and the effect of the paternal heredity, in contrast with the *functional values* of response to Divine love, promptings toward heaven, and the opportunities for overcoming the maternal heredity (no true psychology that is not at once structural and functional).

Chapter 31

Sleep and Dreams

It is plain that any study of matters akin to sleep and dreams, fantasies, obsessions, and the like depends, for the most part, on inner states attributed either to disease or to an adverse element in human nature commonly associated with the problem of evil. The doctrine before us is radically unlike any physiological theory by which sleep and dreams are supposedly explained with reference to fatigue and toxins. Nor is it the interpreters of dreams who find evidences of the Freudian “unconscious” with special reference to sex, repressions and complexes. There is no technique for the discovery of dreams of the sort with which we are here concerned. Doctrinal principles are still in full force, as in the ancient days when Joseph was warned in a dream to flee to Egypt with the Christ-child and his mother. For the present “land of dreams” is not that of caprice, as if bodily conditions were its basis, on the assumption that those fancies which flit in and out of our dreams come by a process of free association. The human spirit is not left at the mercy of any itinerant being or physical vixen which our dreams might attract from the nether region; it is always under Divine Providence, by night as well as by day, and what is permitted to touch us in our dreams is as surely under law as the ordinary processes of our waking state.

This, then, is another chapter in the psychology of obscure states explained by reference to what exists for a purpose, or is permitted that man may be held in a state of equilibrium between the two characteristic loves, and thus able to exercise his freedom. Moreover, we can hardly follow the doctrinal description without remembering that Swedenborg passed through two years of obscure dream-states before he could distinguish between a dream or vision

growing out of inner conflicts and one containing doctrinal values. It was during his period of obscurity that he experienced the sort of dream which would interest a disciple of Freud, whereas, the sphere of his doctrine was that of the soul's panorama as portrayed in the Scriptures.

To understand sleep is to start with the realization that, in the Divine Providence, we are mostly conditioned by processes of which we are unaware. We do not, for example, know by experience the finer activities by which our spiritual functions proceed. We know what suffices for practical purposes while absorbed in opportunities near at hand. Very much is done for us about which we know little by experience. There is always a balance between forces which have access to us, a basis of correspondence such that the spiritual states through which we are passing invite, as it were, whatever experience might be understood as a temptation, if we knew how we are being tested. Spiritual perception would disclose both the points of contact in our inner states and those influences by which we are either hindered or reinforced in the spiritual world, according to the spheres to which we belong.

In constructive thought, we may imaginatively put ourselves into a state of remarkable wakefulness wherein the spirit hears, beholds, and senses a wide range of activities of which we are unaware in all ordinary experiences in the natural world. By contrast, what we now call our "waking hours," would be a period of semi-sleepiness. By a further contrast, what we take to be the life of our sense-organs is a sleep. The same is true of the activity of our internal sense-organs. Even man's inmost selfhood is in a state of sleep in contrast with the life of the Lord. There are degrees, then, of sleep in comparison with the pure white light of Divine activity encompassing all humanity in the total universe, down through spiritual light as men here

sometimes (but rarely) know it, to the dim light of ordinary mental states, and the darkness of sensuous obscurity.

During the state we usually call sleep, the physiological conditions are such that the cerebrum sleeps, while the cerebellum is awake.¹ Respiration as associated with voluntary activity ceases, but continues in relation to involuntary.² Thought in the active sense sleeps. Love remains awake. Here we have a distinction which will guide us in the effort to picture sleep throughout.

We recall the teaching that there are two distinct brains, as definite in function as will and understanding. The cerebrum is related to truth, the cerebellum, or little brain, to love: the one is the organ of the understanding, the other that of the will. These two brains are united as the physiological basis of mind, but their functions should not be confused. The cerebrum communicates by means of the medullary parts with the fibers ruling the muscular system, while the cerebellum controls the involuntary activities, including the expression of such emotions as shame, fear, reverence, and many movements essential to the bodily organs. Furthermore, the cerebellum is formed to receive the good (which is of the will); hence the derivative affections, many of which may function in relation to sleep—while the cerebrum with its intellectual activities is quiescent. We note especially all mental responses explained by reference to love, and by indirect inference to the process called “sleep,” because consciousness is not attendant upon it. Love has access to the whole man when intellect withdraws, and with the supremacy of love there comes a more direct openness to Divine influx.

We begin, therefore, to realize what sleep is on the physiological side by eliminating from the description all processes pertaining directly to the cerebrum; we infer what it is

mentally by noting the psychological processes which correspond to the cerebral change. As a recent writer puts it,

“[S]leep, properly speaking, involves a changed condition of the cerebrum (so that) this brain makes a most complete self-surrender. It relaxes, gives up all rigidity, and loses all tension. It becomes like an uninhabited house. Its very structure yields and all erectness of waking moments is abandoned. The cells and apertures close up, the passages are in a manner obliterated, and a most complete release is supplied to all the hidden forces of the vital system. . . . When, therefore, we begin to fall asleep . . . the reins of government pass from many ministers to one monarch. The whole empire of the human economy becomes controlled solely by the little brain with its *ceaseless* energies and its immortal loves.”³

The inextinguishable vitality of the cerebellum is explained by the fact that this little brain is, in the physiological order, the first organ to receive Divine Life, the secret receptacle where will-power is formed, where there is a perennial fountain or unfailing reservoir. As Divine Love never sleeps, so this organ corresponds with the continuous activity; hence the wonderful restoration of nervous and muscular vitality, following upon refreshing sleep. The unconscious reception of Divine vitality is the secret. The copious outflow of new life means a free-coursing current of health and power. It is not sleep, as such, which refreshes, but what we receive during sleep. That there is also life and power of thought beyond that which we class as voluntary is evident from our dreams, when conscious thought is quiescent and involuntary thought

continues, when we have no power to give direction to our ideas and imagery. In brief, our intellectual vitality falls back upon the vitality of Divine Love.

While the angels rule the mind, bringing deep humility and peace to the whole being, we sleep under a panoply of love, hidden in the depths of our being, where the Lord hallows our immortality with His Holy Presence. Heaven is nearer while we sleep, earth while we wake; and the more we curb, restrain, and suppress or control the turbulence, commotion and fear of a distrustful unbelieving heart . . . the more will our minds come into conjunction or nearness with the gracious and blessed sphere of a satisfying love, and “sleep in Him.”⁴

We also note that, as love is awake, together with its attendant affections, man would be directly subject to adverse influences appealing to his affections, were there not special provision to guard him from evil contacts. Subtle promptings would instill their insidious persuasions into the affections, and enormous crimes would result, if man were not then protected more than at any other time. Angelic spirits are entrusted with this duty of watching over man while he sleeps, that is, spirits who guard by aid of the cerebellum. Sleep, so far as the mind in general is concerned, means that as all exterior thought is quiescent, all inhibitions and intellectual protections are quiescent too.

This doctrine is in marked contrast with current explanations of sleep as due to bodily conditions, such as the overcoming of fatigue, or the expulsion of poisons which have entered the organism, or have been produced in the process of the day’s work. Sleep is not essentially a physiological process, despite the above-mentioned facts about the two brains. It is not for the

mere purpose of resting and restoring the body, as important as this may be. Sleep is spiritual and is primarily for spiritual ends. Nor, is it even a time for mulling over subconsciously those ideas which we have committed to the hidden processes of thought. For the little known activities of sleep are not attributed either to bodily conditions or to mental conditions, but chiefly to those far-reaching relationships which include the spiritual world. Thus sleep fulfils a purpose in the Divine economy which puts spiritual things first.

The general character of sleep becomes clear only so far as it is envisaged as an affectional process in which the spirit is in more intimate touch with renewing powers on which the inner life depends, the life that, in essence, is love. While man would seem less under protection than when awake if we were to judge by the intellect, we find him tenderly cared for so that he is much more under protection, inwardly in touch with Divine Providence. What occurs during sleep is not a brooding process which makes us aware of the advance of ideas during the night, so that in the morning we find ourselves nearer the solution of our problems. This intellectual progress may indeed be a result. But, what first happens, is a renewing of the affectional life, so that the spirit is more likely to be receptive. Clearer ideas may come later when the understanding resumes its usual round of activities. This shows why clearer insights may come in the morning, that is, after affectional process has accomplished its work.

We need not then revert to the old-time theory of “unconscious cerebration,” as a supposed hidden intellectual process to account for the fact that a person may work out a problem during sleep (on the assumption that the brain as a whole never sleeps) and may awaken with the solution.⁵ There would be as little reason for taking up with the popular view that we possess a wonder-working “sub-conscious mind” which accomplishes marvels during the night. For the clearer ideas of morning’s early light are not subconscious after-effects of our own mere

thinking the day before. Our sub-consciousness is not a closed circle of independent self-operative activities.

The explanation is that the process of renewal is originated from outside both mind and brain, since sleep is essentially spiritual. There is no unconscious cerebration (in William B. Carpenter's sense of the term), although there is involuntary thought in our dreams. The brain is never conscious, either in sleep or in waking states. The term "unconscious" suggests a prior state of consciousness and, hence, it is applicable to mind or spirit only. Consciousness is not a product of the brain. Therefore, consciousness does not yield to the process merely because the brain is less active. The solution of the problems which the mind receives during sleep does not differ from solutions coming to the mind while awake. The mind is always in touch with more direct sources of activity than we are aware of. Since Divine influx is always the real principle on which the mind depends, we look to the doctrine of influx for an explanation, whatever the secondary conditions in mind or brain during sleep, or in the waking state. To foster the processes of our internal nature, is to give the spirit more fully to the sources of light and life, loving Divine truth the more, more eager for a quickening impetus from Divine goodness.

This view that sleep, by interrupting all conscious relations with the natural world becomes a process of spiritual renewal, has been analyzed at length by John Bigelow.⁶ A first point of emphasis is that nocturnal darkness is an ally of sleep. The conspicuous changes wrought within us by its processes are not physiological. They become spiritual through seclusion from the world which is most perfect in sleep. The inner point of view, once made clear, we see why the aged sleep less than others, why sleep makes more difference with some of our appetites, why our endurance is greater, and why the need for sleep diminishes as the organization of our life becomes more complex. We also see how events of great moment had

their genesis during sleep, how altruism was first taught us, and why such stress is put on sleep in instances described in the Bible. More specifically, the exterior memory being quiescent during sleep, the mind is able to function with the interior memory. This, then, is the direct clue: “In proportion as the mind is capable of being withdrawn from things sensuous and corporeal, in the same proportion it is elevated into things celestial and spiritual.”⁷

Dreams

In the more important sense, dreams are prophetic and have served a purpose representatively as modes of giving revelation. In general, dreams are distinguished by types as: (1) coming mediately through heaven from the Divine, including prophetic dreams mentioned in the Word; (2) mediated through angelic spirits, notably among the people of the Most Ancient Church, who received instruction in this way; and (3) mediated through spirits near man when he is asleep, dreams of the ordinary sort, significative in lesser measure. Fantastic dreams are from another source.⁸ In the supreme sense, dreams signify prediction from Divine foresight. On the plane of immediate revelation intimately associated with visions, as in the Most Ancient Church, they were related to perception and knowledge of goods and truths. Prophetic dreams which were Divine pertained to the prediction of important future events. These were internal. It is possible, indeed, for a man to *see* in a dream as in the waking state, since it is the spirit that sees. Representative and significative dreams disclosing truths to the prophets were mostly of one kind. These states flowed in to disclose the mysteries of heaven. They came while the recipient's ordinary processes were asleep.

The spirits through whom dreams are given, correspond to the communication to be made to the state of the recipient. Representative dreams typify certain ideas. A great variety of dreams

may, in fact, descend from and represent the same angelic discourse. These dreams take shape in the mind of the recipient by means of ideas and imagery in the memory, also by mediation of the recipient's affections.

The dreams which angels mediate to us are altogether different from those induced by spirits, and are classed as beautiful, delightful, instructive, and predictive. Spirits not only induce dreams in us of the ordinary sort, but they also dream as we do, while the exterior mentality is quiescent, the interior being activity in the dream. In dreams from spirits, the spirits act the part of persons seen in the dreams. Representations are induced, or persons are introduced, without representations. By a "representation" is meant a process dependent on images to which our natural experience has accustomed us.

Fantasies

Dreams involving fantasies may be explained as fantasies, in general, are understood, by noting their association with falsities and appearances. A fantasy is a lulling or deadening state due to inferior influences. Man is inundated by fantasies when, in a corresponding state of cupidities, and if the desires which attract the fantasies were not active, there would be no point of contact with inner states of that type. Thus, a fantasy is a kind of vision and spirits can induce appearances by such means, according to the kind of influences they are seeking to bring to bear. An evil spirit, is indeed, scarcely anything else than cupidities and fantasies, with the appearances entailed.

Fantasies are not necessarily induced by dreams; but a fantasy is a cloud-like state comparable to a dream. We need not try to draw a sharp line between fantasies in dreams and fantasies in semi-waking states. In any case, a fantasy may distort reality. Thus, a fantasy may

present a beautiful object as foul, or a foul object as beautiful. If evil spirits have any power over us, it is by means of destructive fantasies. Everyone in hell is left to his own fantasies. This is, in part, what is meant by hell. Desire to possess the things of the world, is a fantasy. In fact, love of the world may be described as a visionary concupiscence or fantasy.

From this characterization we may infer that the process known nowadays as daydreaming is of the nature of a fantasy or cupidity, more or less misty in type, and enlisting imagery corresponding to the desire. The fantasy of a lower affection absorbs the mind for the time being. The illusions of these fantasies are such that, what is sensual, seems lovely. Thus, fantasies from the love of the body are clothed in corporeal imagery. It is possible for a man so to enter into a fantasy as to confuse it with reality and permit it to infill his mind. The natural mind is replete with fantasies. Indeed, fantasies reign in some so that they have the same effect the senses have in the body. Hence, it is difficult to break the rule of fantasies acquired and confirmed through evil desires.

But there is a perceptible sphere associated with every fantasy. Since fantasies operate together with cupidities, we may know the sphere from the ruling desire. Fantasies also pertain to other matters, such as notions in regard to communications with spirits, and the notions by which even learned people confirm some of their ideas. There are fantasies concerning the infinite and the creation of the world. A fantasy, in intense form, is an insanity. That is, it is possible for a person to become so in-rooted in fantasies as to be immersed in them. One fantasy leads to another. And all fantasies, like actual dreams, have a semblance of reality sufficient to produce the illusion. Thus, hell itself might be described as a persistent fantasy. What appears real in the hells, so appears because of semblances. The light of a fantasy is due to the falsity from whence it arises, in contrast with the light of persuasion which implies truths.

An unreal dream or vision produced by spirits is, of course, a mere fantasy, and the unreal visions of the spiritual world also belong in this class. An illusion of this sort may be described as an external semblance in which there is nothing internal; the appearances are not in correspondence.

We have used the term “dream-fantasy” to cover this sort of mental process because daydreaming as a brooding process is familiar, and we have only to consult experience to observe that in daydreaming we let a fancy carry our attention, as it will, from image to image, notion to notion, rational or absurd, just as in dreams we are mere spectators of successive images. It is not necessary to presuppose some occult or mysterious process in our dreams, as if these states differed in type from the brooding processes which we all know. Consequently, it is not necessary to suggest modifications of the seer’s doctrines to meet current views regarding dreams. Our studies are not leading to the conclusion that sex is so nearly central as the psychoanalysts assume. What is central is self-love, with its attendant affections, some of which involve love of the sex. If our ideas circulate about sex in our daydreams, our dreams during sleep will manifest similar fantasies. We need not attribute to our dreams any hidden meanings not already manifest in this inquiry as a whole. Hence, we are not called upon to develop a special technique for the analysis of dreams. The dream-fantasies of our semi-waking processes are already at hand for analysis, if we are inclined to inspect them. But a higher principle is offered: insight into spiritual living. A dream-fantasy is a mere effect. Our concern is with causes. Moreover, not all our dream-fantasies are sensual, or even sensuous. It is perfectly legitimate to mull over a problem, to dwell meditatively on a project before us. What is decisive is not the dream-fantasy as such, but the desire or affection. In a mind imbued with pure motives the fantasies will be pure; they will be fancies, and a fancy does not necessarily involve a falsity.

Furthermore, our studies have shown that it is not desire which determines an inner state, but rather the delight taken in it. If a man did not anticipate such delight, he would not enter into his desire, fantasy or daydream. Misconceptions enter in a mind given over to sensual desires, with the notion that a person will find satisfaction in realizing these incentives—as if he were merely a body without a spirit, as though delights of the type chosen did not breed pain. Since the whole process is clear, we need not obscure it by making it turn upon a subtle analysis of dreams and the so-called unconscious assumed in order to account for them.

If life itself be in any sense a dream, it must be because we have entertained a falsity until it has aroused confirmatory imagery which has invaded our senses of reality. All illusions of self-love might be classed here. What is persuasively real by comparison is what true love discloses: love for the true and the good, manifested toward the neighbor as from the Lord. We are awake to the degree that we know what is real with regard to what is good and true. We are victims of fantasy only so far as we have not yet cleared up these prior matters, permitting the light of heaven to shine through falsities and fallacies, to explain appearances in contrast with reality.

Chapter 32

Spheres and Spiritual States

Love, as man's central motive, carries manifold affections with it and has a general direction. Love toward God and the neighbor sways its attendant affections in an upward look or outgoing attitude; self-love either turns within, in self-centering affection, or towards the world with a desire to control people and amass wealth. When our attitude is affirmative towards spiritual living, we look up and out in hope and aspiration; when negative, we draw in, closing the door even upon friendly influences. Kindred thoughts and sentiments, in either case, combine to produce their own field, which projects itself into the larger field of its corresponding social relationships. This projective power, with the coloring or determining emotions, is especially noticeable in commonplace experiences like an outburst of anger, and enveloping fear; when the atmosphere is "blue," as we say, the inner world being tinged with this emotion, or darkened by fear. Our projected states constitute a kind of fourth dimension, a little world which is so real for us while it fills our horizon that it is almost like a world of spaces or distances.

As odors surround a plant, indicating its genus or species, so spheres of love or faith manifest the quality of the spiritual states from which they spring; so, too, the individual, as a whole, is surrounded by a sphere, to which the several factors of his inner life contribute their share. This sphere exhales from various sources, for each plane has its states of affection, its type of life or thought. A man's sphere, in part, manifests his interiors, for instance, his type of charity; and, in part, his exteriors. Naturally, there is a wide range of spheres, from that of a

heavenly type of love, to a sphere of vilest hatred. Although imperceptible, as such, to the dull and unresponsive people of the world, a man's sphere will make itself acutely known to a sensitive person. The ideal instance is perhaps that of good-will, sending itself forth from a warm and loving personality with a radiating presence, as if in welcome to the whole world.

What is obvious in the ideal case is, however, true in all cases; some kind of sphere goes forth, some presence exerts an influence, either overt or so nearly imperceptible that its effect is produced, howbeit this influence may be attributed to other sources. The influence of a subtle sphere has been compared to the combined effect of little particles which, emanating from material objects, are too small for the eye to discern, particles which are essentially the same in nature as the objects themselves. The atmosphere surrounding an object, too subtle to be detected by human senses, may manifest itself to the acuter senses of an animal. So, too, a dog will scent his master's sphere in the print of his shoes long after the tracks have been made, while dogs are sometimes employed to track fleeing criminals, or other unknown persons, by aid of an object to which remnants of the sphere are attached. What is required is a sensibility acute enough to detect the emanation or sphere in the given case. We may picture the sphere surrounding a person in terms of emanations capable of being felt, but ordinarily classified as an "unconscious influence," notably in instances of infatuation where bodily attraction is effective under the guise of what passes as love. To detect these personal spheres in their fullness would, of course, be to determine the planes from which they emanate, to identify the ruling affection know how and why it is influential. Thus, we would understand a so-called magnetic personality; we would more keenly realize why we like to be in the presence of some people, why we are immediately repelled by others.

In any event, that which actually rules a man is sent forth in his sphere, although its quality may be far from obvious, save in those instances where a man is admittedly absorbed in what is of advantage to himself, such as one who is unmistakably innocent or genuinely devoted to goodness. Good spheres, with their accompanying affections, are a protection against evil; evil spirits cannot stay in the sphere of an angel. But there are as many spheres as affections, and their respective combinations, hence, some are less distinctive. A sphere is, in general, a man's image extended outside of himself, an image of all the qualities and principles in his make-up. Thus, a sphere may signify self-excellence, super-eminence or authority, in the case of men high in rank. But, in persons gifted with faith and charity, the sphere of authority is said to be wonderfully united with goodness as a central factor.

Another factor in spheres is the massing of principles and persuasions which enter into and condition the intellectual life in relation to truth or falsity; the denser the falsity, the darker the sphere. Other spheres express credulity as a characteristic attitude. Still others show that all beliefs are limited by relationships coming within the range of the bodily senses. Thus, materialism has its distinctive sphere. Spheres of fantasies appear like clouds. People who are actuated by hatred and revenge exhale spheres colored by these intense emotions. We might compare a personal influence of this sort to the intense hatreds fostered in certain nations during the World War. Granted great numbers of people who resemble one another in their beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, affections, we have what has recently been called "the soul of a people" So, too, a group of dissenters or strikers generate their sphere.

In the spiritual world, all thought is communicated by a sphere which manifests both will and understanding. Conjunction with others is affected by these spheres, for spheres of thought and affection mutually communicate themselves according to presence. He who has been given

over to hatreds, revenges, adulteries, avarice, deceit, or luxury, is encompassed by a foul sphere which at once identifies him with what is infernal. Those who have taken delight in benevolence, charity, and especially in love to the Lord, are encompassed by a grateful and pleasant sphere pertaining to heaven itself. All these spheres are perceived from the loves and derivative affections acquired in this life.

The objective which determines a man's life also determines his sphere. Thus, a spiritual or celestial sphere identifies a man with his particular heaven. The universal heaven is in the sphere of ends. Whatever reigns universally with anyone, produces its sphere. We may then, in principle at least, trace a man's sphere to the faith and love he manifests, thus, to his central purpose with reference to his work in the community, his dedication to service, and so to the heavenly society to which he belongs.

Seen from the spiritual world, there are many spheres surrounding a man—some from the spiritual world, agreeing with his interiors, through which he is in a society of like affection; others, less spiritual, are more characteristic of the natural world. Thus, a certain sphere accompanies one who is passing through temptation. Whatever is clothed for use in a lower sphere, is covered by things which pertain to that field of activity. A pure sphere is capable of receiving a thousand-fold more influence than a gross one. Since the sphere which exhales from a man is from his whole life, it includes every sort of state, even his diseases with their unclean spheres. When a man draws an evil to himself, he acquires a sphere of that evil; this, in turn, enables evil forces to adjoin themselves to him, so that, as his sphere is reinforced, the evil increases from more to more. So, too, when an evil accident happens, it is because the sphere of spirits in that evil have gained dominion, and learned how to produce that misfortune. On this

basis, crime-waves would doubtless be attributed to the spheres of evil spirits, reinforcing the lawlessness and other evil deeds of men on earth.

All thoughts and affections are said to enter the society with which they agree. This is plain in case of dense spheres in which are sensual spirits, in contrast with the purity of angelic spheres. Man's endeavor in relation to both heaven and hell may, in fact, be described with reference to the groups of spheres to which his affections correspond. This is another way of saying that, both in general and in particular, man is held in equilibrium between heaven and hell. So far as his spheres are concerned, there is nothing hidden—to those who have open spiritual eyes. Whatever a man has thought, spoken, or done, is thus made manifest. His persistent belief discloses itself as surely as his prevailing love. But his dominant love especially makes known the extensiveness of his sphere in both quantity and quality. For our encouragement, it is important to realize that a good sphere so extends into heaven that good spheres there conjoin, this confluence of spheres being the basis of conjunction with the Lord. Then, too, each province in the Grand Man, or Humanity, in its spheres of goodness seen as One Man by the Lord, has a distinct sphere; so far as man is in heavenly affection, he is already in one of these spheres. Otherwise stated, the conjunction and basis of all things in heaven is through the sphere of Divine goodness in the eternals of the spiritual kingdom. Love more fully constitutes the whole man in heaven; the derivative sphere of life flows from him like an exhalation or vapor, which may be compared with the effluvium around plants and animals. This effluence around a man, forming his sphere, is communicated and transferred to others, and received by them according to their love. Thus there is a complete inter-relationship of spheres in the two worlds, between the two worlds, all this mutuality being according to the principle of correspondence.

This doctrine of spheres puts special emphasis on what is really decisive in man in relation to manifold influences of which people in this world are obviously unconscious. The good man, deeply responsive to Love and Wisdom, allied with a society in the spiritual world, is more widely influential than we supposed. So, too, evils, due to self-love, are more infernal, because of the aroma or sphere emanating from and attracted by them. Although unaware by actual perception of the presence of a heavenly sphere, by aid of this doctrine of spheres, a man may picture himself amidst heavenly influences, reinforcing his efforts toward goodness and truth. Moreover, by doctrine a man may realize that he is in the Divine sphere proceeding from the Lord in its perpetual endeavor to save all mankind. This is the way Divine providence operates—never in a purely general way, as some have fancied.

We may make our imagery vivid by comparing the Divine sphere to the warming and illuminating presence of the sun. The sun of the spiritual world is like the sphere which encompasses each angel, and by which he is presented. Heavenly spheres mean radiant presence. The sphere around the Lord is the sun for all the angels. From this central Light, as the starting-point, the spheres should be envisaged as less and less bright, down through the scale of thin flame, gross fire, bright cloud, and black cloud, to spheres in greater and greater contrast to the sun. On our part, the beauty of the response may best be described as the delight which these heavenly spheres arouse. The delight of the affections encompassing a person is, in brief, the atmosphere pertaining to the dweller in the spiritual world. Again, the spiritual sphere which proceeds from the Lord may be characterized as that of a universal sphere of marriage love. This, too, is another way of characterizing the Divine providence.

Since the Divine love is known from its sphere, which pervades the universe, we have a way of suggesting at least what we feel when the Divine presence seems unutterable. Indeed, we

may attach this imagery to all the general principles and significant spiritual states discussed in the foregoing pages. All sympathies, for example, in contrast with all antipathies, become the more vivid when we put the facts we know in terms of spheres. We then see anew why good and evil cannot mingle. To feel the sphere of life pouring forth from a man's native disposition would be to know his real type, even before coming into his more tangible or visible presence.

The great thought in all these matters is, of course, the sphere which seeks to elevate all men to heaven, infilling the universal spiritual and natural worlds. This may be compared to a strong current secretly carrying a ship along. "All who believe in the Lord and live according to His precepts enter this sphere or current."⁹ Given this teaching concerning the trend of Divine influences with us (as Providence, Wisdom, Love), we may make the doctrines of influx and correspondence much more concrete and vivid.

Spiritual States

The term "state" in psychology ordinarily signifies an inner, or mental event, in contrast with a process or event in the brain. It is a unit or single item. Its meaning, or value, is disclosed by comparison with other states. This usage agrees with the preset doctrine so far as mental states are concerned; a state is that in which and according to which a thing is, so long as the thing continues under the given conditions. Thus, a man may be for a considerable period under the dominion of fear, envy, jealousy, namely, in an emotional state. Our states are both transitory and permanent, that is, relatively permanent; and either general or particular. The general state may be prevailingly good, hopeful, and optimistic; although the particular state on a certain day may be discordant or pessimistic. The particular and individual states are related to the general state, and the complete description of a man's status at a given stage of his development would

include all the factors characterizing his real life at the time; thus, his real status would consist of spiritual rather than merely mental states. This, his real status, is known to the Lord, and the Divine influx is conditioned by it. Indeed, whatever influence enters man's life is necessarily determined, for the most part, by his spiritual rather than his mental states, that is, his degree of openness or resistance, the interior response he makes. Furthermore, the Lord appears to everyone according to his state.¹⁰ In general, whatever is brought into the inner life by influx is received according to the individual's state.¹¹ To judge one's conduct by reference to the ends pursued by it would be to begin by considering the various states in which one is making due allowance for the fact that the states vary according to the perception.¹²

All states have their periods, their beginning, successive progress, and end. A "full" state is an entire state from beginning to end with reference to all its increasing and its maximum.¹³ The end of a state of conjunction is the beginning of a following state, which is one of separation.¹⁴ The stages of life vary, in general, according to the ages or stages of development, in particular, according to the affections.¹⁵ That is, there are changes of state in successive ages, for example, infancy, childhood, maturity, and old age; also during and subsequent to regeneration. The former things are left behind when a new state of life is put on.

There are, in general, two states--one of good and one of truth--which serves as standards by which to estimate other states. The former is a state of being, the latter a state of manifestation.¹⁶ We are apt to think of changes of state as successive in time and space, but this reference to goodness and truth shows that the changes are to be regarded by appeal to principles. In reality, neither time nor space can be predicated of the interior principles in man; these interior changes are called "states" for want of a better term.¹⁷ The changes do not occur in time or place, but when the mind changes in its affections and derivative thoughts. In the

spiritual world this is plainly seen; since changes of state, in a continual progression from one into another, is characteristic of life there. Thus, in the interior heaven, there is no idea of interior and exterior; instead, there is an idea of more or less perfect (which corresponds to interior). All motions and progressions are changes of the state of life. No one state is exactly like another, to eternity; nor does one spirit or angel pass through changes of state like those of another spirit or angel.¹⁸

Prior to regeneration, man's changes of state are inconstant, as his mind fluctuates upwards or downwards, towards heaven or hell. But when man suffers himself to be regenerated, the changes are continually being carried upwards; hence, into more interior heavenly societies.¹⁹ When a man is strengthened in the truths of faith and the goods of charity, he is introduced into other states. The former states thus serve as a plane for the following state, and so on continually. The states of regeneration are truths and goods and their conjunction.

Evils and falsities cannot be removed and goods and truths put in their stead save by many changes of state. Spiritual states, in general, contain "infinite things" and every least phase of a change also. In a "full" state, the change is such that nothing is lacking for receiving the influx of innocence.²⁰ A state is not full when truths have not yet qualified as good, to make it capable of receiving a corresponding state of innocence. The state of means to end is entirely different from the state of the end.²¹ So, too, the external or natural states are always to be distinguished from the spiritual state which is peculiar to the internal man.

Man's first state (innocence), followed by a state of light is, in turn, succeeded by a third, in which man begins to love the world and self; in his fourth state (because of his externality), man cares nothing for truths but denies them. These correspond to states of the Church.²² Thus

the same principle holds throughout. Even among angels, there are variations of state according to changes in interiors; for angels as well as men desire to be in internals at one time and in externals at another. Man's changes in his interiors depend on the variations of intelligence and wisdom, varying from the innocence and ignorance of infancy to the state of wisdom and innocence therein of old age. The first lasts while the interiors are being formed; in the second, intelligence has not yet begun to be present; in the third, intelligence appears; while in the last, the will to live by truths and goods is paramount. Through this succession of states, the wise man sees the marvelous operation of the Divine providence by means of prior states as planes for those following.

Man is able to turn either to the Lord (by aid of the Church, worship, and the Word), or to himself. Hence, follow the typical changes of state. To turn to the Lord, for example, is to be put into the state known as "illustration," or inward perception of truth.

Every state which man enters from infancy to old age remains with him and returns in the other life, exactly as these states had been in this world.²³ Thus, not only the goods and truths of the memory, but also the states of innocence and charity persist. When the states of evil and falsity occur, these are tempered by the Lord by means of the good states. After death everyone's state of life, at first, is such as it had been in the natural world.²⁴ Man then passes through a state of his exteriors, one of his interiors, and then one of preparation.²⁵ All these occur in the world of spirits. The first state, in which a man is in the condition he was in here, lasts with some for days, with others for months and yet others for a year, but rarely longer. The time depends on the agreement or disagreement of the interiors with the exteriors. At first man is not aware that he is attached to a society. Therefore he goes hither and thither.²⁶

Since in the other life all conditions with man are known and, hence, are to be classed as changes of state (not as conditions of space and time), we might well learn to think of the spiritual life here and now as a series of states, paying less and less regard to a person's chronological age. There are several clues which might be followed. The series from infancy to old age is one. The states pertaining to love to the Lord and the neighbor involve other series, which we may contrast with their opposites. Then, there are states prior to regeneration; and those, at first involving reformation, lead to those germane to regeneration and, thence, to man's life after he is thus born anew with respect to his will. Thought "with the spirit" is here the guide. A spiritual idea derives its whole content from a spiritual state.²⁷ Thus, "state" is predicated of love, wisdom, affections, and their derivative joys; also of goods and truths in general. All these are above or out of space; *states of love* may then come to the fore instead of space, and *states of wisdom* where we once thought of time.²⁸ States of life, in contrast with days, months, years, are thus values or meanings. Furthermore, affection and thought, charity and faith, will and understanding are states of a self (or subject of knowledge and experience). Hence, they are substances, spiritual realities.²⁹ So, too, man's three states—damnation, reformation, regeneration—are states of advance in which each depends on man's exteriors and interiors, not on time and place.

Goods and truths, as apprehended by man, vary in each man through the changes and variations of the forms of the mind.³⁰ Every change and variation of the state of the human mind change and vary something in the series of things present and consequent.³¹ Thus, affections are changes in the purely organic substances of the mind, while thoughts are changes and variations in the form of those substances.³² It follows that memory is the permanent state of these changes and variations. We then understand why it is possible for man to retain what is essential to

character and wisdom. Since the spiritual state of man is his state after death, in contrast with his state in this world, regeneration belongs essentially to the spiritual world.³³ So, too, the joys of heaven are not those of “place,” but of man’s state of life from love and wisdom. In this, as in other respects, there is a state which induces the form of man’s interiors. To say that a man’s life changes, is then to say his form has changed.³⁴

The successive states cannot be identical with one another, because no two things are identical in the universe. The changing series involves both a change from a past to a sequent state that is different; and a perpetual change of form, especially in internals. Again, the states of life change with marriage especially when there is conjunction of minds through marriage love.

The changes of state incidental to reformation and regeneration are states of full freedom, because man then acts from the rational principle of his understanding. So, too, in a state of actual regeneration he is in a like freedom. But, he then wills and acts, thinks and speaks from a new love and a new intelligence from the Lord. Hence, the psychological difference between reformation and regeneration is that (1) in the first state, the understanding acts the first part, will the second; while (2) in the second state, the will acts the first part, the understanding the second—understanding from will, not will from understanding.³⁵ The prime reason is that the conjunction of good and truth, charity and faith, and of the internal and external man, can be effected in no other way.

From infancy to young manhood, man passes through a whole period or series of states classified as “humiliation” before his parents and as “information” by his teachers; but he then enters a state in which he becomes his own master. Man’s mature spiritual state is knowable in part in relation to his situation in the Grand Man. Thus the description of man’s states is another

clue to the type of his love and its accompanying affections, with the sphere in which these affections find their field of expression; all spheres change exactly according to the changes of state. Spheres, states, the affections implied in changes of state, and the functions which the ruling love implies, give us a way of envisaging the spiritual life as a whole at any given level of development,. To picture these states and processes without lapsing in spatial and temporal imagery, is to see many intimate points of correspondence between man's life on earth and his life in the heavens.

Chapter 33

The Life of Affection

We have seen that, as dynamic psychology, this doctrine centers about love, that the whole of life is a relationship of loves. With this approach, we are concerned with human nature in its entirety, in contrast with studies of human life turning upon essentially intellectual interests. It is necessary to remind ourselves of the scope of our inquiry, of the fact that we are concerned with life as it actually is for every type of person. For, in undertaking to describe the feelings of pleasure and pain, the emotions and desires, together with references to sleep and dreams, our inquiry became so analytical that at times we seemed to lose sight of the fullness of life. Indeed, the doctrine seems at times endlessly explanatory, in a baffling complexity. One reason for the apparent remoteness from the life of affection is found in the fact that romantic love is not under consideration as we read about it in novels, plays, and poetry. Instead, what we are offered is a doctrine which is essential to understanding the spheres of love which all such literature portrays. Another reason is our seer's apparent coldness or prosaic mode of description in which it is left to the reader to supply the warmth and emotional vividness. Still further, the doctrine of love is in the last analysis a doctrine of the Lord: one is bidden to realize what love is as it wells up in the human heart and communicates itself to all phases of man's nature.

Making allowances for the fact, therefore, that we are concerned with love and its various modes, with special reference to doctrine, we remind ourselves, nevertheless, that in a realizational way, we are concerned with the life of affections which anyone may verify by

appeal to passing states of experience, to marriage, the home, and other groups united by friendly relations. We are here presupposing human beings actuated by all the impulses and passions common to existence on earth, whatever excursions we may also make into the heavens, with reminders of the romance and warmth of love here scarcely suggested. Truly to know the human will is to realize that the far-reaching life of affections, in all their multiplicity, is included in what seems, for the moment, to be merely formal doctrine. For “will” we then substitute “love,” in order to see how intimately our studies relate to such men and women as we personally know. Again, love carries its delights; delight is pleasure, so it is closely related to the social activities all about us. We are presupposing real life with all its bearings on feeling and the emotions, with recognition of the fact that most men and women live to a large extent in their emotions and feelings. All this being taken for granted, there is still something more to say, especially when we take account of the fact that the affections become articulated representatively in one direction (that of self-interest, self-love, the world); and also organized in a more intimate connection with heavenly affection adjoined to Divine Love.

Man is not a pleasure-lover by mere impulse, in response to unreflective self-love. He is also a pleasure-lover by conviction. Indeed, a philosophy has developed around the assumption that pleasure is the highest good. It has sometimes been averred that pleasure is the only object of our desire. But questions forthwith arise concerning the kinds of pleasure, whether of mind or body or both; and how we may take to ourselves enduring pleasures, how we may obtain as much pleasure as possible, hence, happiness as more constant and, hence, blessedness as pertaining to the spiritual life and so to the future world. The pleasure-motive might be overdone, and life might lead to despair in disappointments over pleasure. Evidently, we must take account of much more than pleasure in order to possess enduring pleasure at all. So, in turn, we find that

the greater happiness comes when we are working for the good of others without thinking of our own pleasures. We are led to ask what is the real good of our neighbors. Again, we raise questions concerning true marriage, and inevitably we are led to consider its opposites. Thus, our inquiry once more becomes analytical and doctrinal.

These moral issues now come before us in what we term, in brief, the life of affection, with the understanding that “affection” covers both pleasure and delight, both desire and love, hence, activities pertaining both to the body and to the spirit. The “heart,” in turn, includes both the religious interests which suggest the possibility of permanent conjunction or marriage between will and understanding, and the extensive spheres of the loves of sex, and of the marriage relation in all its phases. In essence, much that has passed current as pleasure is here understood to be rooted in self-love, with special reference to its delights. Where pleasure is the obvious motive, self-love is the deeper incentive. We give ourselves over to pleasure-seeking as an apparent end in itself, concealing the fact that we are prompted by self-love. What appeals to us as the admissible motive is the satisfaction we take in our social activities. What we ostensibly seek and wish to keep alive by repetition is the delight. So, we throng places of amusement and hurry through work to resume our pleasures. Beneath all this is our ruling passion. It is with this affection that we are directly concerned in what follows.

Granted the fact that it is the anticipated delight which urges man on, we are prepared for the description of the process which accompanies this delight. Such delights extend all through the scale, from the lowest or sensual level, to the highest phases of celestial blessedness. While this factor is less dwelt upon in a work like *The Divine Love and Wisdom*, it is brought out in all its fullness in *Marriage Love*. The latter work enters into such details in the description of the life of affections, that we might well devote a whole volume to their study. For, admitted that love is

central, that it is the “life of man,” life is understood in fullness only so far as we include not merely the affections which ordinarily come under the head of psychology, but also those which yield subject-matter for all the novels and short stories, all descriptions of sexuality in the world.

No phase of our life is so difficult to describe, however, as the affectional. We must feel pleasure to know it, and experience delight to realize its power. We usually introduce this element of our life by implication, suggestively, or in poetry, by means of the drama, or through music. Hence, we take it for granted that novelists can accomplish what most of us cannot. But, again, in our day matters pertaining to sex are portrayed or discussed as never before, and psychology has been introduced to aid in the analysis. The frank recognition given to sexuality is a way of admitting that affection in this, its vividly real phase, is most surely and intimately the life of man.

The doctrinal basis for this description has already been given in part. In man, there are two faculties, will-love and understanding. These are more or less separate in actual life. We are prompted by Divine Providence to seek their union, and this prompting to conjunction is universal. But if we are incomplete in our own nature until we have attained union between will and understanding, we are also incomplete in our relation to one another. The prompting to conjunction extends through individual and social life as a whole. The highest conjunction is with the Lord. Union by whole groups conjoined in love toward the Lord and man is characteristic of the heavens. This union in other terms is marriage. Thus marriage becomes a universal term. True marriage, or marriage love, as highest in type, gives the clue throughout. When this love is understood as essentially spiritual, as union of souls—union understood in the sense of conjunction, not as a mere blending of personalities in which individuality is submerged—we possess a standard by which to discern not only the meanings of the best

marriages on earth, but also the influences which beset man in the spiritual world, and the variations or departures from the standard. Consequently, we are considering only another application of principles which have been central to our study from the first. Hence, we bear in mind the inter-relationship of goods and truths, the nature of knowledge, the falsities especially to be guarded against, the function of desire, and the nature of feeling and emotion.

Marriage Love

The recognition given to the life of affections as central to human nature is classed, in the first place, as “love of the sex,” and what we are concerned with is not details but universals in so far as doctrine is essential to true psychology. We are likely to miss the greater meaning of marriage love as a principle unless we reflect upon this principle at times impersonally, leaving out of account for the moment the fact that, for us, marriage is a relationship of persons

The general doctrinal idea of marriage love (*amor conjugialis*), from which various distinctions follow is that, in the Word, the Lord is called the Bridegroom and Husband, while the Church is the Bride and the Wife. Hence, conjunction of the Lord with the Church, and the reciprocal conjunction of the Church with the Lord, is called “marriage,” Again, the Lord is the Father and the Church the Mother. The offspring of the Lord as Husband and Father, and of the Church as Wife and Mother, are, therefore, all spiritual: sons and daughters, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and others whose names signify generation.

The spiritual offspring, in another sense of the term, born from the Lord and the Church, are truths made manifest by spiritual perception and by thought from such perception; also principles of goodness from love, charity, and affection. From this marriage, or union of goods and truths flowing from the Lord, man receives truth to which the Lord conjoins principles of

goodness, so that the Church with man is formed by the Lord. The human husband does not represent the Lord, and the wife the Church; since the Church is constituted through both. Hence, both in heaven and on earth, the marriages of angels and men do not correspond with the Lord through one partner alone. For the correspondence is with marriage love, and what follows from it. The Word is the means of conjunction because it is from the Lord, and is the Lord. Marriage love in this general sense, then, depends on the state of the given church, because this state, in turn, depends on man's wisdom. Since, in general, the Church is from the Lord, marriage love is also from Him.

It is to be noted that the general principle is unfolded at length in the *Arcana Coelestia*, prior to its special application in *Marriage Love*, a less important volume in the system as a whole. Sense-experience does not disclose this general principle. Nor, is it discerned by intellectual inquiry. This marriage belongs to that region above our consciousness, concerning which we need doctrine from the spiritual world. But what the principle is, in reality, may be discerned in a measure by influx and correspondence as clues.

Marriage love, in the more special sense of union between persons, follows from the general principle: when it is true marriage love. Such marriage is, indeed, rare, but it is still the ideal or perfect type; it is knowable by its quality, as already intimated by reference to goods and truths as from the Lord. That is, this love between individuals is from the marriage of good and truth as specifically made known by its correspondence with the marriage of the Lord and the Church: it is not to be judged by relationships which we actually find on earth. Such love is in origin celestial, spiritual, holy, pure, and clean. The love as ideal is to be distinguished from love as actual with men in the churches. Thus we have a standard.

More distinctively, marriage love, pure in heavenly origin, is the “fundamental,” or universal of all particular loves classed as celestial, spiritual, and from these, as “natural.” Into this purest of loves are gathered all joys and delights which signalize higher forms of love from first to last. No one can enter this love or participate in it save those who come to the Lord, who love truths and goods—the principles which constitute the Church. The ideal love of the ancients in the golden, silver and copper ages was an example of this.³⁶

The principles of goodness and truth are, we have seen, universals of creation. So, by creation, these principles are in all created beings, according to the form of each. These principles are both universal and social. There is no independent or solitary good or truth, but universally there is conjunction, the inclination of two into “a one” having been implanted by creation. From the conjunction of good and truth as universal, there is an influx of goods and truths from the Lord. It is from this influx that there comes the specific inclination known as love of the sex, and marriage, love between persons.

This love of the sex is inferior or external in the natural man, who possesses it in common with the animals. But marriage love in the heavenly sense of the term is within the love of the sex, as a germ in its matrix.³⁷ The love of the sex is not, then, the origin of marriage love, but its derivative or receptacle in which the internal principle is implanted. Granted the descent of the heavenly principle, the love of the sex becomes transformed into the chaste love of the sex. This is a much higher process than the one which, in recent terms, is called “sublimation.”

Man and woman were, by creation, so wrought as to be forms of this heavenly union of goodness and truth. The married partners are “forms” in their inmost, according to this type.

Many consequences follow in men and women whose interiors are open so that heavenly love generates its like in the ensuing affections.

It is obvious that such matters as chastity and its opposite pertain specifically or chiefly to marriage at its best. Thus, chastity implies marriage with one consort only, Christian marriage being chaste: true marriage love is from chastity itself. It then follows that the delights of this type of marriage are chaste, even in external matters. To become spiritual from the Lord is to make possible the progressive purification which characterizes this type of union. Such chastity is not of the body merely, but calls for total renunciation, by means of religion, of all impure affections. Chastity does not pertain to young people, as they are not yet aware of the love of the sex: there must be consciousness of this love, and awareness of other matters by contrast. To be chaste, is to condemn evils which like adulteries are harmful. To be genuinely chaste is not to abstain from unlawful acts on prudential grounds alone, that is, for external reasons: one must possess the internal motive of marriage love. Nor does chastity comport with the theory that marriage, as such, is unchaste, that perpetual celibacy is preferable. It might be possible, however for true marriage love to remain with the individual, in case of celibacy, since marriage relates to the spiritual or internal state, although conjunction of two consorts is usually understood.

We note, especially, that no person can be in this marriage love until he wants to be completely the other's, reciprocally, in the higher affection in which love is mutual. For this love, including as it does conjunction of minds, is an image of heaven; hence, it implies all that is true of heavenly love, in relation to the heavenly order of society. In this sense, it is the fundamental of all love, despite the fact that most of us think of the personal relationship before we consider general social principles. Granted this love as the central affection of the spirit, we

understand why love can be disinterested or impersonal in various relationships calling for social service. But the personal relationship surely and rightly follows, with the qualification already mentioned, that true marriage is invariably between two consorts only. Here the principle means mutuality through union of two into one. This union of two, on the spiritual plane, is a union of two minds such that the interiors are reciprocally united.³⁸

Then follows the delights of true marriage love as *social*, in contrast with individual pleasure, which is apt to be egocentric, if not sensual. The “delight” here referred to is internal, due to marriage love, as the term is here used is only an external delight without an internal one. Therefore, it belongs to bodies, not to minds. It is, indeed, earthly, almost like that of animals. So, too, it is doomed to perish. But true marriage love is permanent, granting the conditions already indicated.

No one can show what true marriage love is, and what is the nature of its delight, except one who is in the good of love and in the truths of faith from the Lord; because, as has been said, true marriage love is from heaven, and is from the marriage of good and truth there.³⁹

There may, then, be marriage of good and truth in heaven and in the Church which we may discern as an ideal in the relationships of the human spirit in its best estate, whatever follows in a wholly different connection concerning bodily states on earth. Here, as elsewhere, therefore, we distinguish between spirit-function and nature-process, between a state or activity of the human spirit and a biological condition.

So, too, many other considerations are involved with respect to the right attitude between one individual and another. For example, “that which is done from true marriage love is done

from freedom on both sides, because all freedom is from love, and both have freedom when one loves that which the other thinks and that which the other wills. From this it is that the wish to command in marriage destroys genuine love; for it takes away its freedom, thus also its delight. The delight of commanding, which follows in its place, brings forth disagreements, and sets the minds at enmity; and causes evils to take root according to the nature of the domination on the one side, and the nature of the servitude on the other.”⁴⁰

Love of the Sex

Spiritual doctrine is essential to the psychology of sex, because man would not otherwise know how to discriminate sex, and would be ignorant of the right way to love it.⁴¹ Hence, the importance of knowing that the faculty which prompts to union was implanted by creation and, therefore, is Divine in origin. That is to say, both the inclination to desire conjunction as union of two souls and minds, and the ability to experience this conjunction in all its relationships, are innate in the individual, in both man and woman. Here the psychological differences begin. For the prompting to marriage with one wife is not original with the male sex, but is solely with the female, from whom it is transferred to the male.⁴² Because of this transference, the inflaming of the mind by the mere thought of sex becomes possible. Then, through betrothal, the universal love towards the sex is determined so that it attaches to one man and one woman. Furthermore, there is a difference due to the fact that the union of minds is union between the will of the wife and the understanding of the man and, hence, the conjunction of the understanding of the man with the will of the wife.⁴³

Love of the sex is to be distinguished from marriage love, as above described.⁴⁴ For the former is allied to the natural man, hence, everything follows which holds true of the natural

man; while true marriage love is to be understood by knowing the spiritual man. The natural man desires and loves eternal conjunctions only, hence, the pleasures of the body from this affection. Love of the sex is accompanied by allurement, whereas angelic love of the sex is devoid of all allurement from lust, although abounding in inmost deliciousness. Here, as elsewhere, it is the interiors that are decisive. The love of the sex remains with man after death such as it has been in interior thought and will in the natural world.

The love of the sex as implanted from creation is, however, a universal element of all love. It is implicit in the soul. Thus, it is the essence of the whole man through his function in propagating the race. It remains after death also through the fact that a man is still a man, a woman still a woman. Man is masculine through and through, as, indeed, woman is inherently and wholly feminine. The two were created thus, with their persistent tendency towards conjunction. This tendency, or endeavor, is the effort which precedes marriage love. The conjunction is so inscribed on each that it cannot be obliterated.

Again, the love of the sex persists as it had been interiorly because of the fact already emphasized, that every man is his own love, and this love is embedded as it were in his spirit. Thus, if the love of the sex is interiorly of the chaste type of spiritual marriage, it continues to be of this type after death. But, if it has been interiorly unchaste, it so remains. The love of sex is not, then, the same with one individual as with another. The differences are infinite. It is what this love is *in spirit* that determines its various characteristics.

Love of the sex, when it has alliances with lust, is identified by these its affections, in contrast with spiritual love. At large, it is love toward many, and with very many of the sex, as opposed to marriage love with one only. With many people, also, love is simply natural and

nothing more, and a person has the usual natural affections in common with the animals. Yet, despite the fact that love of the sex is natural to man, it is marriage love that is peculiar and proper to him. To become progressively spiritual is, in that proportion, to put off the love of sex and put on marriage love.

In the beginning the love of the sex appears to be one with marriage love. But the two are separated as marriage progresses. Then, the love of the sex is exterminated with people who are spiritual, and marriage love takes its place; while with those who are natural and contrary is true. The love of the sex with many is not only natural in the common or general sense of the term, but it is impure and unchaste, roving and unlimited. Chaste love of the sex is free from the idea of lasciviousness. Much depends on the accompanying attitude and desire. Thus, in some people, love does not partake of the flesh but only of the spirit.

The love of the sex involves in the very least principle of one's life a disposition to conjunction. It perpetually inheres, so that the man or woman desires conjunction with the other. That is, the desire although ostensibly natural alone, as if it were mere love of the sex, bears implicitly within it the prompting already described as an innate inclination toward conjunction which underlies marriage love. Before conjunction, a man is half a man, with the desire for conjunction inmosty latent. In time, true marriage love is understood as having nothing in common with unchaste love, since it is first a love of the spirit, and only secondarily a love of the body. Harmony and sympathy are basic in this pure love. The inclinations of love are expressions of this harmony and sympathy.

The Psychological Basis

Stated in terms of the psychological differences between the sexes, this inner affinity implies on the part of man an inmost principle which is clothed in wisdom, this inmost being masculine love; while with the woman the inmost, which is the wisdom of the man, is clothed there from. Women have an interior perception of love, man an exterior perception only. In woman, the will reigns more than the understanding, such being their nature, even to the fibers. In man, who is intellectual, reason rules; and the disposition of the fibers accords with this masculine nature. These psychological differences are native to man and woman, the only being innately intellectual, as above indicated, the other innately volitional with special reference to their perception of love.

Conjunctions formed on earth are seldom from any internal perception of love, but from an external perception which hides the internal. Spiritual marriage, as such, is internal conjunction of souls. Progress toward such marriage is possible by means of enlightenment concerning the real nature of men and women as spiritual beings. Much turns upon the realization that, as love is Divine in origin, so spiritual love is from celestial, and natural from spiritual. The differences and types are not then derived from externals in the natural world, but, like all the principles which we have been considering, have descended from the heavenly toward the earthly, with an ideal possibility of an ascent toward the celestial. The corporeal basis of love is, in brief, the ground in which higher things are implanted.

More abstractly stated, true marriage love, as understood from doctrine, is from the union of goods and truths, truth from good being in the male, and good from truth in the female.⁴⁵ It is because of its origin and correspondence, we repeat, that this love, as celestial, is pure and clean beyond every love, both among angels of heaven and among men of the Church. It is in this fundamental sense that love is first celestial, then spiritual, and thence natural, so that there is a

descent through series and degrees. To keep the loves in this order would be, for one thing, to respond to love of external things, not from the things themselves, but always from a spiritual motive. Then all joys and all delights would be in accord with the heavenly standard. Thus, too, the love of the sex would be regarded as from the marriage of goods and truths from the Lord, and it would be seen just how far and why marriage love is within the love of the sex as the highest incentive. It would also be clear that the male and the female were created to be the very forms of the marriage of goods and truths and, thus, to embody the perfect type,

“The reason is that love cannot do otherwise than love and unite itself in order that it may be loved in return. Its essence and life are nothing else; and women are born loves, and men, with whom they unite themselves that they may be loved in return, are receptions. And besides, love is continually efficient. It is like heat, flame and fire, which if restrained so that they go not forth into effect, perish.” Hence, it is that, with the wife, the inclination to unite the man with herself is constant and perpetual; while, with the man, the reason there is not a similar inclination to the wife is due to the fact that man is not love, “but only a recipient of love, and because the state of reception comes and goes, according to interrupting cares . . . to increase and decrease of the powers in the body.”⁴⁶

Granted a conjunction inspired in the man by the wife according to her love, and received by the man according to his wisdom, a very long story might be told concerning the fruits of this union; and, by contrast, an equally long story about the reasons for coldness, separation, and divorce. Keeping close to the ideal values as our clue, we emphasize the central truth that love which is from the spirit in the body is enduring; love of the spirit and of the body from the spirit enter the minds and hearts of married partners with friendship and confidence. On the wife’s part, there is a perception of the husband’s affections, with prudence in moderating them. This

prudence comes through three psychological channels: by sight, hearing, and touch; but it also bespeaks wisdom in the woman. The resulting sentiments express themselves by means of thought and will, by wise adaptation to the desires of the man's will, and by the sphere going forth from the wife's love to conjoin her with her husband. All sympathies can be understood in relation to these reciprocating influences. From this uniting sphere, also, come states of innocence, peace, tranquility, inmost friendship, full confidence, and a "mutual desire of mind and heart to do each other every good; and from all these come blessedness, happiness, joy, pleasure, and from their eternal fruition heavenly felicity."

With the ideal values in view, and granted the special psychology of one's love-nature, for example, the teaching that the sense of touch is the one proper to marriage love,⁴⁷ the true principles of choice in marriage follow.⁴⁸ By contrast, there follows an elaborate psychology of departures from the standard. The principle here is identical with the one already dwelt upon in another connection. That is, love goes forth to ground itself in bodily conditions, it becomes more or less enveloped in these, and with very many people the love-relation is a compromise with the flesh. For the time being, the spirit may be almost hidden from view, as if body determined spirit, as if spirit had no power from within to break free from bondages. But the realism of this description of the darker side of man's affections is elaborately set forth in order to be true of all the facts, and to disclose the little known truth of marriage love as a high ideal. "For the things written in this book have for their end that the reader may see its truths from his own reason and thus ascent."⁴⁹ The assent will bespeak the individual's reaction to the full. For no test of one's attitude is more direct than a man's response to ideals of marriage as essentially spiritual, as implying opportunities for unending development through the interactions of will and understanding, love and wisdom, in man and woman. The significance of this standpoint lies

in its approach to some of the central problems of the ages from the viewpoint of the spirit; in contrast with any technique which undertakes to judge the love-nature in the light of repressions, complexes, the analysis of dreams, the function of the “censor,” and the influence of a “psyche” identified with the so-called unconscious rather than with the soul. There is no need of Freud’s technique as supposedly fundamental, if we see the significance of the present doctrine of marriage love.

Thus, in a complete psychology of the marital relation there is need for knowledge of changes of state in man and woman (184-206, summarized under 184). Again, there are detailed universals concerning marriages⁵⁰ involving other psychological principles, developed in detail. Given such knowledge as the standard, insight into all the troubles of married life, as frequently observed on earth, would follow in every instance as an application of the general principle. Granted that the general cause of such troubles is “disunion of souls and disjunction of minds,” from which come indifference, discord, contempt, loathing and aversion,⁵¹ the whole investigation would, thenceforth, be on a psychological basis, and the technique or art would follow from these principles. The evils described in terms of “scortatory love” (enumerated under 423) are one and all known by contrast with the spiritual standard, although described in terms of evils actually existing in the world. It is observable that some of the statements made are with reference to matters which one may test by inquiry, for example, the assertion that man prefers one type of marriage, woman another.⁵² It is also noticeable that the description of existing social evils is, at certain points, made in terms of individual adjustment in a given age of the world, for example, in Swedenborg’s time in Europe. Here, there is the frankest sort of recognition of the actual situation with the natural man in his carnal desires. One might take this realism to be as authoritative as heavenly doctrine at its best, unless reminded that, in this

teaching as a whole, there is a discrete difference between truth and falsity good and evil. What obtains with man in his natural estate is no criterion concerning what ought to be true of him, what becomes true when the interiors of his mind are open.

Chapter 34

Adverse Correspondences

Evidences in favor of correspondence as a universal principle of description and explanation have increased with our inquiry. All relationships and communications are said to be by means of it, and all spiritual and natural things are intelligible by relation to it; man's existence not only corresponds in its complete universality, but there is not "the smallest particle" of him which does not correspond. In fact, he exists and subsists by this means.⁵³ Since every principle, law, condition, and process is thus to be understood, it is clear that correspondence is the basis of the Divine order. Apparently, all things, planes, orders, and degrees are therefore in perfect relation: there seems to be no place for non-correspondence.

It might be remarked that what is thus universal, both at large and in detail, explains nothing because it explains everything. To say this would be to overlook another aspect of our analysis, leading to a central problem of our whole inquiry. We found a preliminary contrast in the fact that there is both an influx from the Divine in man's interiors and an influx from the world with its diverse tendencies. There is reality; but there is also appearance, illusion, fallacy, falsity, and fantasy. To grasp truth is also to reckon with falsity. To know goodness is to understand cupidities and other evil desires which qualify man's receptivity. Moreover, there are both favorable and adverse spheres; there is love toward God and the neighbor, but self-love, love of worldliness. Our quest is for the right interpretation of these and other adverse factors that we may understand man's will, affection, thought, and conduct in the light of both his

heredity and his prospects. All these factors involve departures from the Divine order into the devious ways of man's own selfhood.

Correspondence is, indeed, the basic or universal relation, the law of reality; it implies a standard of perfect adjustment. But if man were in perfect accord in knowledge, attitude, motive, and deed, within and without, his life would be ideal, his adaptation as complete as that of the animals in their instinctive unison with nature. Endowed with freedom and rationality, and individual in type, man is capable of almost infinite variation in his departure from the standard. The correspondences of his mind and brain are complicated by the fact, that as a recipient of influx, there may be manifold discrepancies between his interiors and his exteriors. His will and understanding do not necessarily harmonize. Much depends on what he has taken to himself, what he has either confirmed or rejected, sometimes for the worse. His departures from the standard show, by contrast, how remote he often is from the perfect type of adjustment which might be his were all degrees of his nature responsively open to Love and Wisdom.

In beginning our study of the principle of correspondences, we observed that this principle is neutral on the bodily side, and we learned that the body is "mere obedience." When a man yields to an impulse to meet his opponent with anger, striking blow for blow, his mind with its emotional endowment finds faithful expression in his bodily behavior, equipped as the body is both for anger and for gentleness. To be able to assign true values would be to study every type and quality of mental activity finding expression in bodily behavior. Our nature is utterly faithful in depicting the affections, for better or worse. The law of correspondence is exemplified in every case of external manifestation of what is internal. Hence, it is necessary to narrow the study, that we may see mental life as the interplay of the affections, especially in case of the prevailing love of its overt expression. This concentration on motives is essential, that we may

class one type of affections as corresponding to heaven, the other to hell; then choose the affections that are eligible, according to our love.

For we observe that, secondarily, there is an infernal correspondence by which a vile or wicked motive bears relation to a fiendish deed. This relation is contrary to Divine order. There are unclean correspondences in all discordant states due to filthy loves. The standard is correspondence with what is sound or sweet, healthy or beautiful. In spirit, man is potentially in ideal correspondence with the fully developed human type. In his affections, his attitude, thought, volition, and behavior, he is as much out of accord with the standard as actual facts make plain to us all, in this world of mixed evils and goods, tribulations and blessings. Comparing man's actual conduct with what he ought to be, we distinguish between spiritual correspondence as a Divine ideal, and natural correspondence as a matter of fact. We find, indeed, that man passes through a long life-round of correspondences, from ignorance and innocence, through inner conflicts and enlightenment to freedom and reformation, with opportunities for regeneration. The situation would be confusing in the extreme, unless we could class all these relationships according to ruling affections.

Man's lack of correspondence with the ideal is particularly manifested when we contrast his self-love with love for God and man. In the latter, case correspondence is a harmony between love and the charity in thought, will, and deed, which makes it a perfect work. In the former, it signifies a break and opposition. Granted a certain correspondence, celestial influences are invited. The more a man opens his heart to such influences, the more his spirit corresponds with heaven. Correspondence is, therefore, to be understood as an increasing relation with each degree of ascent toward the Divine. Man is able to cooperate in this advance by subjugating those elements of his nature which, like self-love, seek their own way, and tend toward disunion, even

to the disruption of the spiritual order. Highly important in this progressive acquaintance with the forces that play upon him is the knowledge that man is subject at the same time to (1) influences from the natural world, with its misleading appearances; and (2) Divine influences which keep him in a situation for free choice and response according to his love.

The work of readjustment begins with most of us when we learn to distinguish between mere appearances, for example, in the enticements due to bodily appetites and reality, or what is sound and good, reasonable and true.⁵⁴ For this acceptance of reason as a standard, we begin to lay the basis for ascent to the spiritual plane.

Since the influences which we wield and which are wielded by our fellowmen in their efforts to have their way with us approach us by correspondence, not by continuous inflow, there is every reason for cultivating knowledge of types, for discriminating between what is natural and what is spiritual. For indirectly, at least, a man is known by the company he keeps, in the light of their real influence upon him.

The foregoing analysis has prepared us for the illuminating consideration which points the way out of all this complexity: the Divine life flows into the spirit by an *internal* way, with its implied correspondences of a superior type. This inflow is on a distinctive plane. From without comes the influx of forces from the world, and by an *external* way the influx from the body. The significant point is that we cannot justly describe a man by appeal to either internal or external correspondence alone. The one may be beautiful, the other ugly. A man may be outwardly responsive, but inwardly closed; or interiorly open in a measure, while outwardly subject to adverse conditions which he cannot control.

It is never a question of qualities or substances alone, but also of their use. There is a great difference between one's powers or faculties and the way these are brought into exercise. This distinction becomes of vital moment when we consider what is good and evil in man. For the principle of correspondence is offered as a complete explanation of the nature of evil. The situation is narrowed down when we pass all types of relationship in review, until we come at last to man's minute interiors in his own little spiritual world in contrast with his own little natural-mental world. The first consideration invariably is that man "could not subsist for a moment without correspondence with all things of the spiritual world [at large], for without correspondence there would be no continuity from the very being of life, that is, from the Lord."⁵⁵ That is to say, nothing can subsist from itself, but from another, thence from another, and so on, to the First, by correspondence with what is immutable.⁵⁶ For we can never apprehend "naked spiritual things," or anything else in isolation, but always with reference to the things or beings most nearly akin.⁵⁷ The general principle of mutuality gives us the basis on which to understand the complete relationship. Then it becomes a question of the given degree or plane.

Thus, on the level of sensuous contact with rocks, trees, or houses, we consider events in their successions and orders on that plane, noting how our minds acquire the facts which we cherish as memory-knowledge. We then compare this plane with the one next above it; and come to see the relation between things as diverse, let us say, as a red hat and a sensation of red in the mind, radically different as the two are. Next, we advance to the proposition that, as "correspondences have all force from the Divine,"⁵⁸ the activity resident in sense-perception disclosing a red hat is never due to merely physical forces, but always to the efficiency which comes into the human spirit from within and makes sense-perception possible. The principle of interpretation is invariably from within and above, because of the primary consideration that all

things in their normal state correspond with heavenly realities,⁵⁹ by representing and signifying what is spiritual and celestial.⁶⁰ Since correspondence is the only principle of likeness between internal and external things,⁶¹ it implies the science of all sciences, the law of all goods and truths; but no less surely knowledge of all things that correspond, hence of knowledge of darkness as well as of light, of the way all influxes occur, how all grades of reality are related, and how all appearances find their places in these gradations.

Highly significant for any psychological description of man's actual state in this world is the fact of a break in correspondences between interiors and exteriors, in so far as man's outer life fails to conform to the standard. This break comes under law, but it is an instance of non-correspondence in so far as there is inversion or perversion, or any other state of maladjustment. Man may be simultaneously open to an influx from the world and to an influx from heaven which does not agree with the one from the world. Hence, in men and women as we know them, there may be marked discrepancies. Our study must, therefore, take account of both (1) health, physical, moral, and spiritual; and (2) disease in all its phases, as a departure from the standard. It is here a question, not of disease in the merely medical sense of the term, but of what is bad or vile in contrast with what is good and sound through relationship with the spiritual world.

Disease

What is called for is not neglect of any knowledge we may possess concerning disease as diagnosed by reputable physicians. For, from one point of view, disease is chiefly physical and only secondarily mental, moral and spiritual. Whatever our knowledge, we need a new or additional orientation. For the question of the nature and origin of disease is extended to include misfortunes and miseries of all types, also "sicknesses of the disposition" due to the loves of self

and the world.⁶² While diseases in this comprehensive sense pertain to the spiritual world as well as to the natural, the correspondence is not with heavenly societies in the spiritual world, but with disorderly states and conditions there, hence, with the inferior spheres.⁶³ To understand disease as a break in correspondence, is to trace it to its sources in the cupidities and passions of the lower mind. The result of our study should be profounder insight into the sphere of desire in all its forms. We are primarily concerned with the higher phases of the spiritual life, with disease as a hindrance to reformation and regeneration; not with current ills which may come and go, leaving us untouched, or with illnesses which we hope to overcome without regard to their bearing on the spiritual life.

Disease seems to be merely a bodily disturbance due to external conditions, to infections, germs, and contagions. Hence, we seek remedies or a mode of treatment which will overcome and remove the physical disorders. If we consider mental states at all, we uncritically assume that the accompanying anxiety, fear, or mental disturbance is produced by the disorder in function and tissue. Hence, disease appears to bear no relation to the spiritual life. But disease, as we are here regarding it, is *the inner disturbance itself*, with the evils to which it corresponds; while the bodily disorder is an effect. We need not, then, give much attention to the bodily disorder. The significant fact is its cause, and the relation this cause bears to the level of spiritual development attained.

In the light of its connection with the spiritual world, every disease corresponds to an evil.⁶⁴ Whenever evil enters man's inner world, his spiritual life sickens. The evil, then, tends to manifest itself in his natural life in a form commonly diagnosed as disease, as if the bodily disorder were itself the whole trouble. To take all the factors into account, we must consider (1) the adverse influences to which man is subject before he is aware of his true nature as a spiritual

being; (2) the states in himself which invite these influences; and (3) the relation between these states and those which harmonize with the Divine standard of moral and spiritual health. It is not the disordered bodily condition that is to be dreaded so much as the insidious influence and rule of a discordant inner state, threatening to disorganize the inner life.

A wide range of inner states belong under the head of causes of disease. These causes vary from obvious conflicts to that sickening of life which comes when a falsity is admitted instead of truth and faith, or, when evil dispossesses charity and goodness.⁶⁵ Any state which destroys the impetus toward goodness and truth is as surely a disease as a commonly recognized disorder which anybody would identify as disease. So, too, the whole sphere of evil and sin, of vice and degradation, belongs within the range of influences in question; also any sort of selfishness. For the primary evil is self-love. The external signs and symptoms are merely images of interior states which must be understood to the foundation in the light of the spiritual life as a whole, if we would know why disease has appeared, how it affects our mentality, and how it is to be banished.

For disease is not a product of the natural world. It forms no part of the Divine plan. God did not create man with a proclivity to disease, not even to the innocuous diseases of childhood. Disease exists by permission only. The bodily expressions are allowed to come forth in order that man, noting their baneful consequences, and tracing them to the evils from whence they arise, may will to have these evils removed.⁶⁶

Starting with the law of relationships between spiritual states and natural effects, we note then, that all diseases come under the law of correspondence between what is interior and what is exterior, and that it is invariably a question of the obsessing inner state underlying the ruling

mode of life. For example, take the life of luxury in its various forms, with the intemperance of mind and body, the interplay of excessive bodily pleasures and sensual indulgences, the vices and evil passions of the dissolutely rich who spend their substance in one form of riotous excess after another, with the various ostensible diseases to which such riotous living leads in the course of time. Underneath the various excesses, whatever they are called, and whatever the manifestations classed as disease by physicians, will be the insidious and vitiating desires which beget both the passions of the flesh and the disquietude of mind.⁶⁷ The hidden cupidities with their resultant evil affections are the actual diseases; for these destroy the interiors of the mind, disorganizing both affections and thoughts. When the interiors are disturbed or destroyed, the exteriors correspond. The evil lusts then show forth in the face, and the body as a whole, manifests the inner discord. A man may pursue all these luxuries under the notion that they will afford delight. Thus ostensibly he may be a mere lover of pleasure, like the typical libertine. But, underneath the apparent motive is the reigning evil desire of the flesh due to the loves of self and the world. Behind the prevailing disease is also the attendant pain, resulting from the lust or lewdness, or whatever state may cause restlessness, anxiety, misery. The conspicuous factor in many instances may be fear for the loss of honor, reputation, or wealth. But the victim of excesses is not likely to admit, even to himself, the cause of his misery; for his mind is intent on his gains and the delights he still hopes to win.

The same is true of the various hatreds, envies, and sentiments of revenge, emotions of anger and jealousy, and the like. These might seem to be causes of misery to other people, and we readily condemn such motives in our neighbors. But, in one's self, these states are excused and justified, and one expects no undesirable result. Yet, all these are unclean states. All breed results in kind. They are causes of disease. A cupidity or concupiscence is, in itself, a little hell.

Every infernal state connected therewith invites similar states. Thus, a man's evil desires increase. Disease is, in fine, due to increment of evil desires. Disease is essentially a little hell of inner conflict, seeking to destroy and rend asunder.

The central fact, therefore, is the relation between inner states and outward conditions in the sphere of desire.⁶⁸ Granted the unclean desires, the results will readily follow. What a man is most likely to know is such an actuating desire as the lust for worldly power and wealth, with the bodily delights he hopes to enjoy; what he does not discern is the unclean sphere in the spiritual world which intensifies his cupidity so that it becomes an actual disease. Nor do we know from experience or consciousness that evil in the form of disease (such as the love of sensual pleasure) closes the smallest and invisible vessels of which the great or visible receptacles of the organism are composed.⁶⁹ We are also ignorant of the vitiating effect upon our interiors of the coarser emotions, such as anger, hatred, and jealousy. It is vitally important to have this instruction, for example, to know that the vitiation of the blood ensues when these little vessels are disordered, and that the resultant bodily disease is an effect. For, given this interior knowledge, we may trace our disorders to the excesses which disturb both mind and body, also taking account of the falsities by which unclean desires are fostered. Both falsities and evils take away health from the internal man, and when inner health departs sickness of mind in a less internal sense is one of the consequences. Disease is identified with evil precisely because it takes away spiritual health; what mars spiritual health affects moral, mental, and physical health.

The term "spiritual disease" refers especially to evils militating against will and understanding, hence, tending to destroy the life which is of charity and faith. Natural diseases came originally from spiritual disorders, that is, from sin. As man's life is from the spiritual world, anything which interferes with the spiritual influx is not merely a defect or obstruction,

but a disease. Sin and evil as obstructions and as causes of disease are sharply contrasted with spiritual health, which depends on free response to spiritual life. The prime result of turning from truth to falsity, from good to evil, would be spiritual death, if man steadily persisted. Since the falsifying of truth and the adulteration of good signifies disease in the spiritual life, the whole nature of disease is thus to be understood by reference to the degree of departure from goodness and truth. Since the ideal standard is spiritual freedom, complete victory over disease would call for the overcoming of every condition hostile to such freedom.

There are indeed natural diseases to which an individual may be subject through no direct fault of his own, diseases which do not come from within the individual in question. Therefore, the external or general influx, as well as all conditions due to heredity, should be taken into account, together with all mental or spiritual states due to outward conditions insofar as such states impede the free functioning of the inner life. When man is in a state of bodily disease due to external conditions, his rational processes are affected; since the state of mind depends on that of the body.⁷⁰ Thus, mental sickness may be essentially physical in origin. It follows that no one can be reformed in a state of disease of the body affecting the mind in such a way; for states pertaining to our freedom, hence, to our salvation, are to be met when there is no compulsion which would impede our judgment. A bodily defect might so far hinder the mind as to make free judgment impossible, and such a defect is to be frankly acknowledged for what it actually is. The distinctions between organic and functional, and chronic and nervous diseases also remain in force. No fact concerning disease is to be denied. To emphasize the relationship of disease to the spiritual world is not to ignore any of its aspects in the natural world. Disease should be recognized for the evil it actually is, and we should frankly admit the direful consequences which descend from generation to generation.

Still, when these qualifications have been made, the prior consideration is that natural diseases affecting people of a later generation were at some time in the past due to spiritual diseases, that is, to evils. The fact of disease as a natural state existing today among people who have not themselves sinned in that particular way is no excuse for evils as causes to be seriously reckoned with in the inner life. The sharpest distinction should be drawn between those spiritual states which correspond to hell, and those which correspond to the Grand Man. The only radical cure for diseases involving several generations, such as sexual disorders, is to be found in eradicating the evils by admitting them as sins against the Divine standard of moral and spiritual health. To eradicate the evils, is to face and overcome each and every one of the unclean desires to which as individuals we are subject, including even those excesses and luxuries which we condone on the ground that they are innocent and pleasure-giving.

Health

Although health is primarily spiritual, one should by all means care for the body, keeping it well-nourished and clothed. To insist that the causes of disease are spiritual, is not to say that the soul is independent of the body but, rather, to point out that prudence in matters of bodily health is for the sake of the soul. The goal to be sought is a state of harmony between a sound mind and a sound body, such that the soul may act correspondently and rightly in the body, the body being in a state of entire compliance with a state of spiritual freedom.⁷¹ The soul is always the end, the body is merely the means or instrument. The ideal for the soul is a useful life in the Grand Man. Health is to be understood in terms of such usefulness, disease by reference to any condition which impedes man's spiritual functions. It follows that health relates to heaven, hence, to order, sanity, purity, freedom, and every other state contributory to heaven. Heaven is integrity. It holds all members and functions together in proper connection and safety. Therefore,

the real essence of health is seen in that life of relationship to good and truth in which the interiors are open to heaven. Health is the normal expression of man's will and understanding in response to those promptings which bid him do his particular work in the Divine order.

It follows, too, that a man thinks and wills sanely in details insofar as his thoughts and volitions are in accord with Divine truth and goodness. His mind represents his state of spirit; his bodily states represent his states of mind and spirit. Consequently, to bring his bodily behavior and moral conduct up to the standard of spiritual health, a man needs to begin at the center, both thinking and willing righteousness that he may live righteously. The one who loves the Lord and the neighbor, who thinks and wills from that love so that his whole attitude is outgoing, abounding in joy, is the one who exemplifies the ideal. On the other hand, he who is mean and miserly in attitude, is typical of those who deprive themselves of the joys of true health.

Since emphasis falls on the natural conditions of health and the importance of maintaining them, the Divine providence coincides with natural healing.⁷² Bodily soundness is a condition of rationality. Moreover, when the body is sound, that is, free and responsive, this openness or freedom is favorable to spiritual influx. Granted physical freedom, the mind can function more freely and, in turn, offers more favorable conditions for the expression of the spirit.

The influences favorable to health and healing are, in fact, reciprocal. The benefits flow from body to mind, and from mind to body. Since the interiors of the mind make one with those of the body, when the mental interiors are turned toward the Lord as a sun, the interiors of the body turn in like manner and, in each case, the exteriors follow the interiors.⁷³ The spiritual influx, which finds favorable conditions when the mind is thus focused, is exemplified by the

influx of heat from the sun into all vegetation on earth, with the subsequent vegetative life.⁷⁴ We may then compare the mind, turned toward the sun of heaven, to a tree in its outstanding presence in the sunlight, receiving warming rays according to capacity and need. Without influx, the tree would have no life. Without influx, the mind would be devoid of activity. But the mind, unlike the tree, can close its interiors or open them. This openness invites the influx which is essential both to life and to healing. Hence, we may make full use of the above illustration, and picture the mind as receiving not only light, but warmth, bearing in mind the correspondence between spiritual light and heat and the processes of understanding and will.

The direct appeal is through love. All bodily conditions in their normal state are from the Lord. Love is the life of the body as well as the life of the mind. From head to foot man is such as his love is. Granted the outgoing love toward the Lord and the neighbor which invites the influx in full measure, the interiors will be more responsive, also the mind as a whole, and with the mind the body. Hence the importance of love as a healing power.

The restorative life is not, however, limited to love. There is power also in truth (doctrine). The Divine truth proceeding from the Lord has in it all power, and this power tends to become manifest or embodied in the outermost conditions, organs and functions of the body. To receive Divine truth in the interiors, where falsities have reigned, is to become manifest or embodied in the outermost conditions, organs, and functions of the body. To receive Divine truth in the interiors, where falsities have reigned, is to become responsive in understanding, hence, in the intellectual life generally. The process is like that of the reception of the Divine goodness as charity and faith, displacing evil and doubt, and quickening the affections in general.

We may express this twofold truth of understanding and will by a description of healing as *the recovery of order*. Health is order. Disease is disjunction or separateness, Healing is reunion. The motive power is from interiors to exteriors, fostered by openness of heart, responsiveness of mind, and cooperation of body secured by overcoming obstacles to spiritual influx.

The Divine order never stops midway. It persistently proceeds to outermosts. If the natural, contrary to order, has been separated from the spiritual, the natural must be restored to proper relationships as a fitting vehicle for the inflowing spirit. This influent life is purifying. It tends to advance, not alone for healing in the sense of restoration of health, but for reformation and regeneration in a process of complete purification. To envisage the entire process, is to see the restorative work of the spirit as one of a series of spiritual changes pertaining to man's whole experience in response to Divine influx.

If man had lived in full response to Divine good and truth from the beginning, his interiors would have been habitually open to heavenly influx, his mental life as a whole would have been according to Divine order, and his body in perfect correspondence.⁷⁵ Every mental receptacle would have been in harmony and every little organic vessel also. Health would have been the spiritual-natural condition throughout. Disease would never have been dreamed of as even remotely possible. Health as thus regarded was a Divine possibility. It was, and still is, the Divine ideal. With this standard, our thought about healing should coincide, if we are to view healing in its completeness in terms of a central principle. Thus, we should be able to realize what conditions on our part are imperative if we would heartily cooperate.

Knowledge of man's interiors, with special reference to influx and correspondence, is the keynote. There is no process as spiritual healing without bodily response and cooperation. There is no purely mental healing to be fostered and employed as if thoughts and emotions were the vital instruments, in place of spiritual response to Divine influx, as if a merely mental change could induce not only health, but reformation. For this psychology is the corrective of all theories which emphasize human thought as if it were all-powerful and decisive. Since love or will, with its attendant affections, is fundamental or central, it is the attitude or heart which must change—not the thought or belief. Hence, mere suggestion would be superficial and unavailing. But even when the heart changes, it is not human power that heals: it is Divine love, and this in the degree of response made by man throughout his daily conduct, with faith and charity as ideals.

Since disease is one of the results of the closing of man's interiors to heaven, the complete victory over it will be one result of a far-reaching process. Consequently, there would be no justification for merely mental healing as if it could accomplish the results of Divine healing and save man from the labor of seeking reformation and regeneration. No process of affirmation or denial (as in Christian Science) could take the place of acknowledgment of sins and evils as sins against the Lord. No mental process could be a substitute for repentance. Nor could any self-conscious method take the place of the Divine influx as providentially operating in spirit, mind, and body in its own way and time when man is appropriately responsive.

Neither physical health nor mental and spiritual healing is an end to be sought by itself. What is to be sought is the kind of life in affection, thought, word, and deed, which accords with the Divine standard, so that the influx shall meet response where response is needed. The Divine image and likeness, already latent, is the standard. This potential character is spiritual substance.

It therefore possesses a higher degree of reality than mind and body. This is the substance to be made vital in actual experience.

Here, in very truth, the spirit can become affirmative, for it is the spirit which more directly receives Divine influx, while mind and body receive influx from the Spirit. Everything depends on using Love and Wisdom as ours, while acknowledging that we have no efficiency of our own. The special reason for being affirmative is that Divine goodness, operating from within, cannot flow into what is negative.⁷⁶ “When the affirmative takes place, there is an accession of innumerable things, and they are filled with the good that flows in; for good constantly flows in from the Lord, but where there is no affirmative it is not received.” Indeed, the affirmative is the first medium or habitation of the good. There is every reason for avoiding not only doubt, but every other mental state tending towards the negative, including anxiety, worry, fear, and other adverse states considered in the preceding chapters.

We therefore remind ourselves anew, that much depends on the forms we develop to receive Divine influx, and the quality induced on the soul by the life we live in the world. For the form of the interiors has been acquired, not by miracle, not in general; but by all the particulars of volition and conduct, thought and action in line with our prevailing love. If we have given the mind to contemplation of heavenly forms, we have, thus far, taken advantage of the truth that the internal man is formed according to the image of heaven, so that in actuality man is tending to become “a heaven in least form.”

Again, we have noted that influx is protective, withholding man from evil through the guiding presence of Divine love. The influx is, therefore, concerned not alone with what we take to be our immediate good, for example, the healing of disease; it is concerned with our welfare in

the long run. One may be in a state of separateness or double-mindedness, trying to serve God and mammon. If so, this conflict must be understood and overcome before the effect will cease. We will not be led to the stage of reformation, if still beset by unhealthy states, such as melancholy, a spurious conscience, hallucinations, anxieties, and mental suffering due to a vitiated condition of the body.⁷⁷ All these states are concerned with natural processes and things, and all must be reckoned with. When the mind is sick because of bodily sickness, so that reason is not free, this impeding state must be dealt with on its own plane. As surely as falsities close the understanding, and lusts blind the will, so the exteriors are blocked. All states of servitude are states of sickness. Every state of fear restrains the exercise of sound reason. So, too, we must take into account fallacies of the senses, with falsities which grow out of them; we must include in our description all combats, temptations, doubts, denials, together with incredulities, the insidious rule of self-love in subtle forms not generally recognized.

Equipped with knowledge of these principles, one should be able to detect the fallacies and falsities running through the popular therapeutic teachings now widely current. Some of these doctrines have been based, in part, on Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences, radically misconstrued. Thomas Troward's *Edinburgh Lectures on Mental Science* (1904) may be regarded as typical,[†] having laid down the falsities that (1) thought is fundamental to spirit; (2) will-power can originate new trains of causation (that we have power of primary causation); (3) the subjective mind is entirely under the control of the objective (yet, paradoxically, that the subjective is "the creative individuating power;" (4) the subjective mind is a builder of the body; (5) the body represents the aggregation of our beliefs; and (6) the creative power of thought by

[†] Thomas Troward (1847-1916) was an English author and one of the principal spokespersons of New Thought and mystic Christianity. Among his more popular writings are *The Creative Process in the Individual* (1915), *The Law and the Word* (1917), *Bible Mystery and Bible Meaning* (1913), *Spirit and Matter* (1913), and *The Dore Lectures on Mental Science* (1909).

spiritual prototypes is such that, by the law of attraction, like draws like, and our thoughts create corresponding conditions. Troward cites Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences in substantiation of his views. Nothing could be further from our seer's doctrines, or more spiritually misleading. For the method of healing by denials and affirmations based on these falsities, proceeds on the assumption that "pure ideas are primary causes," that our limitations are "mere ideas," that "we cannot decide wrongly," that "disease is wrong belief," and that healing is due to "change in belief" by *directing* the Universal Mind. Other falsities involve the notion that the subjective or subconscious plane is unconditioned, that "all is good," that our ideals are "already accomplished," and "our oneness with the Whole." There is total disregard, in these assumptions, of the break in correspondences which we have explained in the foregoing, and of the truth that we must first know our falsities, admit our actual state with respect to will, love and life, and then seek that responsiveness to influx which is of such great significance, in contrast with the falsities that the finite will possess power of primary causation, and can control the Mind of the universe. Aside from the confusion between God and man, the basic falsity is that thought, instead of will-love, is fundamental to spirit; for on this basic falsity is founded all that follows regarding the assertion that the subjective mind possesses creative individuating power and can build the body by affirming a prototype and denying the aggregation of beliefs called disease. To reject these falsities at the beginning is to find the whole structure in ruins. To reconstruct, would be to learn the central truths concerning *the internal mind* (not the artificial "subjective" mind). One's attitude and expectancy would be radically different from the outset since it is God, only, who is creative and who originates new trains of causation. Our thoughts have no power to generate corresponding conditions in the body, as if we were omnipotent in command of the central station of the cosmos. Since disease is much more fundamental than

“wrong belief” something far more potent than affirmation of ideals “already accomplished” is called for. To correct Troward’s falsities is to correct those of numberless other theorists in our time who have exalted suggestion to the n th degree.

Chapter 35

Practical Values

No passage in our seer's works more impressively brings these doctrines into strong relief than this great sentence from the *Arcana*: "If . . . man had lived a life of good, his interiors would be open to heaven, and through heaven to the Lord; and so too would be open to heaven, and through heaven to the Lord; and so too would be the very least invisible little vessels."⁷⁸ From such a condition in man's life it would have followed that, health being primarily spiritual, man would have been free from ills and evils of every sort. He would then have passed into commendable old age, and from this age "out of the world directly into heaven."

In other words, man's spiritual states would have been wholly favorable to Divine influx; in his interiors, in love with its attendant affections, in will with its influence on the understanding, and in conduct or life in the world, *man would have been in correspondence*, in accord with the Divine image and likeness. In yet other terms, the primary situation with man is a question of inner or spiritual states. That such states are, indeed, the crux of the matter becomes plain when we recall the teaching so steadily outlined in these studies with respect to the central principle that "all mental activities are changes of state and variations of form," all motion being "change of state," and any change through which man passes being essentially a change of state of some sort. Affections, thoughts, desires, and all other factors of the inner life change with such variations; all experiences depend on these changes; hence man's existence, as a whole, is to be understood with reference to love, life, wisdom, affections, joy, good and truth (and their

opposites), as inner states succeed or displace one another in their series. If we could trace all the results from which man suffers in his illnesses and evils, his miseries, conflicts, vices, sins, and their affiliated relationships, back in serial order to their origins, we would have a complete history of all those interferences with heavenly influx which have caused human trouble. Or, starting with man's states of innocence, and following those which signalize intelligence and wisdom, we would have a general picture of man's whole life on earth in which to place the vicissitudes which have marked his departures and advances with respect to his ideal destiny.

Bearing this complete picture in mind, and remembering what is central in man's spiritual-natural makeup, we also remind ourselves that, by the term "state," is meant essentially his *love*, and by changes of state primarily the affections of love, together with the thoughts there from and other consequences expressed through the influx of the soul into the body. What affects man most vitally, affects the subsequent states from interiors to exteriors, thus, from the internal where the disturbance is most acute, to the externals which portray by correspondence what is in process within. Desirable states imply changes in wisdom from love. Manifold results follow, all along the line. The significance of the various states in their series will be brought vividly before us if we first list these according to the two prevailing types.

The undesirable states entail cupidities, states of persuasion, falsities, evil affections, fallacies of the senses, hatred, combats, doubt, denial, incredulity, emphasis on what is one's own (*proprium*), and love of self and of the world. From these come intemperance, lewdness, feelings which destroy man's interiors and cause their exteriors to suffer, all desires and passions of the lower mind, the lusts of the flesh, and the various anxieties, pains, and evil affections which are made manifest through the body. From these, also, come inversions and perversions of life, love, and sex; and a negative attitude which limits man's power to receive. "He who

believes that he governs himself is continually disquieted, being borne into cupidities, and into solicitude respecting future things, and thus into manifold falsities.”⁷⁹ Thus result separateness, doubleness, melancholy, spurious conscience, hallucinations, mental suffering from vitiated conditions of the body, lust which causes restlessness, and all the unclean activities which belong with these states. The list includes not only hatreds, but bitterness, anger, jealousy, envy, and all other disturbing (selfish) emotions; hence the conflicts which these emotions imply when, from self-love, they are pitted against heavenly affections. What, asks our seer, is “more restless at heart, more frequently provoked, more violently enraged, than self-love?” Numberless variations of inner states thus spring from the most central disturbance: pride of heart is affected, wishes and whims are balked, falsities come to the rescue; and the rest follows, since will gives consent when thus motivated, will appropriates and confirms and, by it, man takes unto himself what he has identified by such means.

From this array it is refreshing to turn to the equally long series of states favorable to Divine influx, notably affections from love to the Lord and the neighbor, thoughts from this love, spiritual knowledge-states concerning goods and truths, faith-states (involving right belief), states in line with freedom and rationality according to true doctrine, conscience-states, charity-states, prayer-states, and right-feeling states such as joy and happiness, and gladness in acknowledgment of all good and truth. Innocence and obedience occupy a prominent place in the scale, states involving an affirmative attitude, preserving tranquility and interior peace; and states combining due receptivity and response to Divine influx with appropriate reactivity in using the influent Life as if it were our own, since there must be efflux that influx may increase. Manifold favorable states follow, in other words, with right acknowledgment of the one source of life and power, in contrast to man’s arrogant assumptions. Man is then lifted into a state where he is

withheld from evil and is purged from the aforementioned states which impede the Divine influx. Fortunately, man is bidden to remember that he “must by all means care for his body, so that it may be nourished and clothed . . . but all these for the sake of the soul . . . that the soul may act in a sound body correspondently and rightly, and may have the body as an organ entirely compliant with it. Thus the soul must be the end . . . for the sake of the uses which it must perform in both worlds.”⁸⁰

Thus, we possess a standard, an ideal of moral health as the expression of man’s advance in spiritual living, through the enlightenment which comes to the understanding from the Word and from heavenly doctrine interpreting the affections. The health of the body in its best estate is an expression of spiritual health or righteousness as the goal to be sought above all external things and above all mere self-control. To the extent that man is able to think and will sanely, he is in a position to cooperate with Divine life in overcoming the impeding states of mind and body.

Two factors afford a clue in thus aligning ourselves with the heavenly standard: (1) love, with its attendant affections, thus the responses of the will, the emotional associations and effects due to the central motivation; and (2) the interpretation put on the accompanying experiences according to the enlightenment (or ignorance) of the participant. Blindness of the understanding, for example, with the ensuing falsities, is a common source of trouble. When the understanding is thus clouded, the will is closed, and a closed will entails interference in various ways. The understanding is also blinded by the lusts of evil. Contrariwise, enlightenment due to knowledge of Divine truth involves vital differences all along the line.

To put such emphasis on inner states is not, as our doctrines repeatedly remind us, to say that man is conscious of such changes in their inner significance; or, his state of life, both in general and particular, is completely hidden, and he is unaware of the deeper meanings of his long transition to old age. But we know from the doctrines that it is never a mere question of time or space, despite the fact that the flux of inner states is in a temporal series. We know, too, that the structure of man's faculties is always a condition. The Lord sees the state of everyone from inmost to outmosts, and is present with each man according to both his spiritual states in their significance and his passing states. Everybody is in a state distinct from that of others, and yet all men are under conditions of law and order so that they are intimately related.

Since there are both constants and variables in these relationships, much depends on keeping what is merely transitory (psychological) apart from the structures and substances, the Divine influx, and the recipient forms without which there would be neither states *as experienced*, nor states *as significant* for man's advancement. While mental changes are going on from moment to moment, we know that spiritual states signifying an advance will endure according to the prevalence of right affections. Every incoming mental state produces changes, and varies something in the series of states present and consequent. Yet, plainly, states of life cannot be said to change merely through what happens, as we erroneously infer when judging by appearances. Many changes of state are upwards and downwards, and inconstant.⁸¹ A prior state is continually a plane for those that follow.⁸² But, the significant thing is *direction* toward self or towards the Lord.

Man may or may not be looking from his natural state to a spiritual one. Truths of faith may be in process of being formed within his understanding, or this may not be the case. All states are intelligible, therefore, in relation to their opposites, and there are inversions of all states

prior to regeneration. All significant states have their periods, their beginning, successive progress, and end. Yet, the end, in the sense of purpose or meaning, is never determined by the mere succession. What brings good, blessedness, or happiness, depends on very much more than is apparent when man judges by experience. Evils and falsities cannot be removed, goods and truths being put in their places, by any merely psychological process, as so many believe in our day. Agreement or likeness of state conjoins, while disagreement or unlikeness disjoins.⁸³ Hence, there is always a correspondential clue to be followed in endeavoring to understand. But it is impossible for those who are in the love of self to know what their ruling love is.⁸⁴ Until the affection changes, the thoughts and the consciousness will not change. Marriage brings its changes, for instance, and much depends on the conjunction of minds through conjugal love. Hence, we have carefully qualified the foregoing statements before raising the question: To what extent is it possible to learn the actual status of individuals today?

Each of these qualifications shows that very much more can be learned than some devotees of the doctrines have believed, because they have failed to bring together in a single perspective what is taught concerning influx and correspondence in relation to the two types of love and the two groups of inner states, favorable and unfavorable. What is hidden, is in precise relation with what is disclosed. We are taught that the state of the interiors varies with the degrees opened or closed. We are also informed concerning the state of the exteriors in relation to their embodiment in the happenings of daily life. The spheres which affiliate us with societies in the spiritual world are as hidden as the equilibrium in which man is held between the two worlds; yet evidences are available that man is continually lapsing into hell. We are far from perceiving the actual status of people whose will and understanding are not yet married, but we are keenly aware of the results of failure to attain this union. There are also typical doctrinal

clues in terms of temptation, reformation, repentance, and the trend toward regeneration, which we may verify, in part, by appeal to people we know. Something depends on being able to think intelligently in relation to the Divine influx from inmost to outmosts, since we can put so many matters hitherto obscure into right connections.

It makes a great difference in meeting actual needs, when we are thus able to think from a definite doctrinal background, in the foreground of which is the right psychology, both in structure and in experienced inner states, since so very much depends on beginnings. We have only to contrast this beginning with that of psychologies current today to see the force of this crucial point. Given the teaching with respect to openness and its opposite, for instance, we may fill in the foreground by appeal to more commonly known facts; since adverse (closed) states involve fear, pain, grief, a disordered mind of some sort and, with this, a similar condition of the nervous system and the body. States of life that are unseen, condition effects that are seen *by law* so that sound inferences can be drawn to causes doctrinally described. Due allowances having been made for breaks in correspondence in so far as man, the individual, has taken on external influences for which he is not responsible, we may within limits trace those correspondences which are most germane to the present spiritual state. Where observation and study end, the rest may be supplied by reference back to the doctrinal descriptions of foreground and background. Righteous judgment belongs, indeed, to “the Lord alone.” Yet, the standards disclosed to man are in accord with it: man most nearly approximates such judgment when guided by Divine truth. We are thus able to correct many misjudgments and to avoid falsities by which sicknesses are separated *in theory* from their correspondences. We can also relate external evils and bodily vices with the sort of life the man is living who manifests them, and note many other distinctions essential to real knowledge.

Physical sickness often appears to be primarily due to germs, to vitiated conditions of the tissues, glandular defects and disturbances, and disorders which have no apparent connection with states of mind or spirit. But when we consider how, in a fundamental way, vitiated conditions favorable to infection chanced to exist, we are concerned with the “little invisible vessels” which imply lack of harmony with the life of goods and truths. Hence, the question arises: How were the crucial inner states originally changed? The answer is that man’s interiors became closed, and states unfavorable to Divine influx began more and more to impede. When the loves of self and the world became predominant, man as an internal being, was thrown radically out of adjustment. Thus, he became sensual, insofar as the evils and falsities from these loves reigned where there should have been mental and organic responses. So, in course of time, man developed disorders having no apparent connection with the inner life. This appearance has long been confirmed in theory by the customary sundering of moral issues from bodily disease, as if the sort of life a man is leading had nothing to do with his maladies. But, in the doctrine before us, no such artificial sundering has occurred.

It is plain that the road back to harmonious adjustment at the center—or forward to such correspondence as the doctrines enable us to picture in minute detail—is discoverable by means of three essentials: (1) knowledge of present unfavorable inner states in ourselves and others, say in case of a besetting fear evoking disorder in various regions of mind and body; (2) frank admission of any lesson to be learned, sins to be admitted, truths to be accepted; or any change in attitude and love essential to interior responsiveness where the spiritual door has been closed; and (3) dependence on Divine help in substituting states favorable to heavenly influx by first, last, and always regarding this influx as a *living, vitalizing* reality close at hand today.

Plainly, there is oftentimes a radical contrast between the symptomatic appearance which the world takes to be sickness or sin, and the inner states circulating about man as a spiritual being, under combat it may be, while also seeking to be true to himself as a spirit without knowing how. Externally, he may be branded as liar or thief. In terms of the nerves and the emotions, he may be said to be suffering from a nervous disorder identified by the experts with “anxiety states,” a phobia or fixation, or one of the various perversions which medical men discriminate by disregarding all references to sin. He may be said to be suffering from either functional or organic disease. Or, his trouble may be attributed to the thyroid gland. But spiritually, he may be in the presence of a crisis entailing a much more central life-history than that of his disorder. However fragmentary the various phases of a person’s existence may seem to be, there is an extremely close relation between misfortunes which seem wide apart, such as miseries due to loss of money and loss of jobs, coupled with loss of morale, marital discords, temptations, diseases of the disposition, anxieties, attempted masquerades to cover up the real evil, the use of palliatives, vices to kill time, and modes of concealing sins ordinarily admitted as such within the churches, but camouflaged in public by aid of psychological terms. From an inner viewpoint, such disorders prove to belong together in relation to the selfhood as a whole. The nearer one’s knowledge approaches heavenly doctrine, with the spiritual perception which it implies, the more these connections are brought into view. One knows that, in terms of such perception, evasiveness and denial would be as impossible as to break a person’s affiliations with the spiritual world.

The clues and doctrines here summarized constitute what may be called a special technique, at once therapeutic and spiritual. Although such a technique has never been formulated as an offset to such methods as those of the analysts and psychiatrists who specialize

in such matters as complexes and sexual disorders, the implied technique is more precise than those prevailing today; since, instead of leaving many vital matters at loose ends, it is based on adequate principles applying even to our relationship with the spiritual world. Because thus highly specialized, it enables those enlightened by it to make a more direct application of insight into causes and effects. So it becomes a question of fostering those favorable states which are most likely to invite the higher type of love. States that are adverse can be detected in a measure, at least, by knowledge of their symptoms. States that are favorable are not, of course, sought because of any claim that a ruling love of goodness and truth can be produced by a psychological process, but because we know such a love makes for cooperation with Divine life.

In advance of any study of “cases,” one would expect that nearly all conflicts (“combats”) will prove to be emotional, involving discordant affections related to our struggling with the prevailing love. This is actually what one finds as the result of extensive study, the typical way of putting it nowadays being this: conflicts are due to a striving towards incompatible goals. The prime result is frustration, hence insecurity, instability. Matters of belief usually prove to be secondary to the contests of daily living. By contrast, Divine truths would give beliefs to live by, and these would be primary, because a vitalizing faith follows, and a sense of security in meeting experiences of every sort. The doctrines of influx and correspondence are here seen to apply with amazing clarity. States of faith lead to right belief, conscience-states to moral constancy, and states of charity to a life of goods and truths. Such states bestow tranquility and peace. Thus, there is every reason for seeking those states which are most influential in producing changes all along the line to outmosts.

For each state like hatred, bitterness, envy, separateness, or doubleness, there is, in very truth, its opposite to set the standard. Hence, there are sure correctives for self-importance, self-

indulgence, and evil desires of every kind. The people whom one advises are not, of course, aware of these alternatives. But they are keenly conscious of being unhappy and frustrated. They do not know why, in the Divine providence, the evils that have been pent-up within them are permitted to come forth, as wars and pestilences are allowed to disclose the evils of society. Our doctrines enable us, however, rightly to construe many effects of this sort which would otherwise be mysterious. While many sufferers resent the idea of being brought to a point where frank acknowledgments are called for, others are perfectly ready to face whatever is essential to inward freedom. Still others can be given the reason for the bodying forth of states which need to be seen in all realistic boldness.

Naturally, the adviser must first have acknowledged the truth that man is essentially reactive, not a giver of life or originator of power. He must have made some progress while using even his highest powers as if his own, howbeit he steadily attributes all life, wisdom, love to its Divine source. He will not permit personality to become so prominent that people look to him, rather than to Divine truth for help. For such leadership as may be granted to him will depend on a certain constancy or conviction which speaks through him, not as a self-conscious achievement. Yet, this will not mean withholding practical instruction on such points as the significance of effort. "If you should withdraw effort from movement . . . movement would stop."⁸⁵ Every practical endeavor is still needed, for example, self-examination with a view to discovering what to conquer next, or, what vastations are in process (by inference, at least).

The practical values of this doctrine are very valuable, being counsels to self-knowledge and self-help, as if these were adequate, unaided. No man, by "taking thought," can substitute favorable for unfavorable states, as if what favors could command universal power, or as if one could dictate the changes which are to ensue. If human states were thus compelling, tranquility

would be poise in self, inner peace could be instilled by suggestion, and all disturbing emotions could be banished by affirming their opposites. If, by any chance, this could be done in some degree, this would be merely mental healing, man healing himself by his own strength. But true healing is not wrought by any psychological device. It is not wrought by magic or miracle. It is neither mysterious nor mystical. Nor, is it accomplished by any cult which exalts the human self by confusing man with the Lord. Permanent healing comes about through spiritual truth concerning the nature and origin of the matters which we are passing in review: it is the Lord only who heals.

Meanwhile, true desire to aid sufferers seeking such healing, is greatly heartened by knowledge of states which cooperatively respond to Divine influx, for example, through prayer which is genuine realization of the Lord's presence with men. In such an appeal, one bears in mind that, what the sufferer hungers for, is already at hand and has been amply provided. One will not pray for any change in the Divine order of events as these are already making for man's best good in deepest reality. One does not assume to know what is wise, or when it is right, for a person's suffering to be brought to an end. Nor, does one try to gain access to another's mind unawares, as if to take away the effect and leave the cause. One's prayer is for the best in another's spiritual life in the long run. Certain physical changes may need to come first. The interior quickening may be long in coming. Much enlightenment may be called for, before the most persistent falsities are cleared away.

Without claiming over-much for the human self, one may depend on increasing perceptions due to dwelling on heavenly truths, seeking these for guidance when perplexed, and endeavoring to keep the mind directed alright. Thus, new centers of association and memory will be acquired. Attention will be drawn to finer and finer distinctions, with increasing precision of

thought and method. One is willing to undergo whatever inward change may be necessary to rid one's selfhood of interferences at any point. Changes coming under the Divine providence, meanwhile, may be said to indicate the way in a measure which others will travel when they are activated by similar states. So, with much conviction, one can speak from experience, having carefully learned to place the emphasis at the right point.

True judgments are made possible, then, by knowledge of the fact that disease, in the interior sense of the term, is a departure from the Divine order, which establishes health as spiritual: it corresponds with sin, which is a disease of the natural degree of man's spiritual nature. Spiritual healing, in the full sense of the word, looking forward to reformation, is return to the Divine order, which calls for a sound mind in a sound body. It is accomplished when man cooperates with the Divine influx by fleeing the sins to which diseases correspond, and living the spiritual life through faith in the Lord according to the Commandments. Although man is unaware of this influx into his love-will, thus into his understanding, and thence from the soul into the body, he may be helped into a responsive attitude in preparation for overcoming the various interferences. Inasmuch as a man is not reformed, unless the external as well as the internal is reformed, this means overcoming obstructions (1) in his spirit, by acquiring nobler affections; (2) in his mind, through mastery over states that interfere; and (3) in his body by overcoming vicious habits of every sort and description, including perversions and inversions such as prevail in our day.

Given the basis of judgment, we are prepared to make special application of these principles, for instance, in case of fear, which closes the interiors of the mind, and takes away freedom and reason.⁸⁶ Insight into a particular conflict is likely to begin in the process of eliciting an individual history, for example, one that involves duality of self, bondage to early

home-conditions, or to rebuffs and contests along the way. One is likely to find a marked discrepancy between mental patterns and designs for living imposed upon people from without by tradition, crystallized beliefs, and custom; and the more interior self which a person aspires to be. But, one is equipped for explaining such contrasts by knowing how the mind functions under stresses and falsities. The point at which to begin is disclosed by friendly conversations.

Chapter 36

Personality

We have noted the general trend of this doctrine toward those matters which are of greatest moment in man's release from obscurities, on the pathway which leads to spiritual freedom. Hence, the interest is essentially different in considering such subjects as love or desire, with the affections and emotions accompanying the prevailing love, in contrast with such present-day interests as the natural sciences. Thus, the term "self" has special meanings, in view of the fact that man's entire selfhood may be infected by motives of mere self-interest, or wholly given over to selfishness, so far as his natural existence is concerned. So, the self may be regarded for the time being in a purely derogatory way, and any account we may give of human personality in its external relations will necessarily take its cue from this outlook.

Man exalts the self, for example, by claiming power as his, taking credit for goodness, or becoming self-centered. He may even entertain the falsity that his thoughts, as creative archetypes, have the power of primary causation so that, by aid of suggestion, he can generate whatever condition he likes. Man easily adopts the notion that he thinks, wills, and acts by power wholly his own. Claiming to think for himself, as if wise, great, spiritual, innocent in himself, and a model of fidelity, salvation seems no longer to be needed, even hypothetically. Or, claiming a bit less for himself, his assumption may be that he is able to combat evil alone, to resist temptation in his own might; that he is able to rule, to make reforms, notable achievements

which bear no relation to Divine Providence. Thinking in this way, man naturally wants to attain what pleases him, as essentially his own master in matters pertaining to goods and truths.

The counteracting truth that man has no independent power, cannot even think from himself, or look into himself apart from a higher principle, is germane to this doctrine as a whole.⁸⁷ To believe in himself, as if he manifested independent life, would be to appropriate falsities and evils. When supposing that he rules himself, man is continually disquieted, carried into evil desires, confirmed in evils and falsities.

Since man should vividly realize that there is a single source of life, wisdom, love; that he is by nature reactive only, not an originator of power; it follows that self-consciousness, as such, is not commendable, nor are its presentations a basis for sound thinking. To analyze, would be to become more intensively subjective. This introspection, if carried to the limit, involves the interior condition known in our days as “introversion,” with its accompanying nervous disorders. Granted that the self is essentially a recipient, the starting-point of true knowledge lies outside of the self.

In the realization that, of one’s self, one is nothing and can be nothing, lies the hope that a person may more fully respond to Divine influx. Any emphasis on will or thought from “within,” would keep us from rising above the mere self. It is wiser to face away from the facts of merely inner experience. To start with the self and look further into it, is to look downward. In this way hell lies: this persistent direction of mind *is* hell, when it becomes a matter of self-interest and self-love as habit, confirmed by adverse desires and falsities. The prime result would be closed interiors, followed by adverse influences, with the admission of hereditary evils.⁸⁸ The more a man permits himself to believe he lives from self, the more he casts his mind down into what is

earthly, sensuous, and corporeal.⁸⁹ Whatever man attributes to self from hereditary evil is evidence that, of himself, he wills nothing rightly called good.⁹⁰

At first thought, this arraignment of the self is staggering. Its intent is to show how intimately man is related to the Lord as “Giver of every good and perfect gift.” There is, indeed, a certain value in permitting man to think, will, and act “as if” from or of the self. It is perfectly natural that man should produce, as if from self. But, unless he presently acknowledges the source of goods and truths, he cannot be led to heaven.⁹¹ Again, man must learn that he arrogates power to himself because he seems independent of his fellows, as though he possessed power in isolation. The truth is that, even when led by himself, so that he is doing evil as a consequence, he is acting in relation to his fellow men.

Man is permitted to think he combats evils and resists temptations as if from self; because he should face his sins, that he may will to have them removed, may do his utmost to be free. Indeed, man must in a measure do good as from self and seem to live from himself.⁹² He needs to draw matters to himself that he may learn what is essentially his, and what heavenly gifts are by comparison. He may rightfully believe that he can, in a measure, form himself. For, if he deemed himself purely passive, he would make no effort, would simply await favoring influx to do his work for him.⁹³ But, to study self, more than the Lord and the neighbor, would be to interfere with the regenerative process. Self-reflection is permissible insofar as genuine affections are disclosed in contrast with falsities. The natural man is not, by any means, the whole man. The spiritual man regards self so far only as his thought may be conducive to genuine usefulness. Hence, he realizes that the activities which are merely for self and the world should be turned in the higher direction.

Man's belief that he as *being from self* is not even a half truth. What is to be noted is that his whole self comes forth into manifestation and is to be understood with reference to his several attitudes, especially the attitude in which he acknowledges the one source of goods and truths. Since the Lord alone subsists from Himself, man has being only in the Lord. Man should not then regard himself as the end or purpose of creation: he should see that he is instrumental to the realization of Divine purposes. It is, indeed, right for man to regard his fellowmen as one with himself, loving others in himself, and himself in others.

Far more important than the negative propositions concerning the self above mentioned, is the teaching that man was created to look above self as well as below, that he may be brought to judgment and make choice between two types of love. Looking above self, man turns to his neighbor, his country, the Church, and heaven; and, especially, toward the Lord.⁹⁴ Looking below self, he turns toward what, in view of the foregoing, we may call his *mere self*. Over against the darkest propositions, we accordingly put the heartening declaration that: "To look above self is proper to man, but to look below self is proper to beasts."⁹⁵

Let man, then, learn that even in temptations, he must combat evils as of himself, while still inwardly acknowledging that, in spirit, he is looking above himself for Divine succor. Man can, indeed, abstain from evils from himself: he has that much power. The great qualification is that he cannot receive good from himself. Endeavoring to withstand evils as from himself, man is in that state of promising effort which draws the needed influx into his will.⁹⁶ The man who, from himself, is "continually falling," is not, then, the man who has learned this great truth concerning the upward look and the downward look.

With the acknowledgment that no goodness or truth is from the self, self-love begins to depart. When man, in freedom, from himself, desists from evil, affections for goodness and truth enter. When, moreover, man shuns evils as sins, with acknowledgment that the victory is from the Lord, he advances still further. Thus, stage by stage, the self constructively responds to higher affections. The self is seen in its truer state insofar as man is affirmative. Unless capable of co-operation, man could not advance at all. The significant fact is that he can shun evils as sins, with Divine help, if he implores such aid.⁹⁷ The power of the self, in such a case, is not merely the power “as if” of himself. His choice really settles important issues. “The man who fights against evils, cannot but fight as of himself, for he who does not do so as of himself, does not fight; but stands like an automaton.” The turning-point in the transition from negative to positive, from lesser to greater expressions of the self, is indicated by a single word: to seem to act “from” self, to be led by self.⁹⁸ For, in true freedom, but to act “as” from self (while attributing the efficiency to Divine influx) is very different. The self then acts from freedom according to reason, from Divine power making forward fullness of life.

The final truth is that man acts with God as of himself.⁹⁹ In retrospect, it would seem slavery to act “from” self, to be led by self.¹⁰⁰ For, in true freedom, there is reciprocal relationship between man and God so that man’s action, “as” from himself, has the full equivalent in his consciousness of his power as his own. There is, in fact, “no difference” save in the acknowledgment that this power with the freedom it brings is from the Lord.¹⁰¹ So, too, man may be led and taught by means of the Word when, to all intents and purposes, he is led “as of himself.” Man can even reform and regenerate himself *as of himself*, if at heart he makes the true acknowledgement.¹⁰²

If, now, we make one last qualification and declare that this acting “as of” one’s self is in reality from the Lord, the final rejoinder must be that, in the last analysis, there is reciprocity. Believing that the power is from the Lord, you will act from it as though (without qualification) it were your own. Indeed, man becomes an angel through this reciprocal action, not by ignoring the self. Since man does not do anything from the Lord *by actual experience* of Divine participation in his conduct, he must act as if of himself even when profoundly responding at heart to Divine influx. Indeed, man’s nature is such that he is given will and understanding wherewith to function “as of himself.” It is imperative that man shall “prepare himself.”¹⁰³

It follows from the above that there is no good reason for cultivating personality in the sense of individual charm, cleverness, or social accomplishments. For, spiritually, man is rather a means to service than a person. Personality must, then, be seen in the light of Divine purposes which we fulfill. The more nearly a man is conjoined with the Lord, the less emphasis he puts on personality. To be led by his personality would be slavery. To rise above self, is freedom. Love, not selfhood, is decisive. It is thought of, and for others, which lifts a man out of self-love as “infernal.” What man does from freedom, affords a genuine clue to reality and knowledge. What man does from his personality, leads toward appearances and falsities. There is, indeed, no real knowledge until man is lifted from the limitations of personality.

On the other hand, there is more to be said about personality with regard to its survival after death. Then, too, there remains the question of regeneration, with the implication that the self is far more extensive and real than in our natural or worldly experience it seems to be. Finally, there is the problem of individuality, with the home that, insofar as we truly come to ourselves, we shall find places in the social whole (Grand Man) in which each is to be a true

individual. Before we consider man in this larger sense, we need to give still further attention to the limitations of personality on its nether side.

Proprium is the collective doctrinal term for negative, evil, or merely personal factors characteristic of the human tendency to attribute over-much to self, to fall into corresponding falsities and evils. To understand this term psychologically is to note (1) man's tendency to inversion, or conduct contrary to Divine order, when falsities displace truths, loves of self and the world reigning over higher loves, with a resulting distortion of life; (2) the tendency toward perversion, adulteration of goods and truths, also loves, by falsities, cupidities, and evils; (3) heredity as a factor, in the sense that, granted the commission of actual sin, with resulting implantations in children, an augmentation of the evils by descending posterity, there may be an augmentation by actual evils committed by the more recent ancestors; and (4) inclination as a factor; for while the actual evils are not transmitted, inclinations to commit particular evils may arise within the individual. To bring the whole doctrine before us, we need, then, carefully to observe that proprium is not merely man's *adverse ownhood* (including self-interest, self-love, and various adverse traits); it is also the totality of the evil and falsity which springs from loves of self and the world. A man may invert his faculties. He may also pervert life, doctrines, goods, and loves. But he is, in addition, subject to proprium as a social assemblage of hereditary inclinations. These tendencies he does not necessarily express. Fortunately for him, they may run out. But, to understand the complete psychology, is to note that proprium, as an individual propensity and a social complex, is liable to infect man's life prior to reformation and regeneration.

The salient points will become clear if we consider them in a number of ways, noting the fact that this doctrine seems at first sight paradoxical. Man's proprium is, in a sense, the life

which is proper to him, so that what springs from self is from proprium. In this sense, man cannot do otherwise than make all things his “own.”¹⁰⁴ Yet evils are from the proprium of his will; it is the falsities that are from his understanding (as perverted). Thus, the will to dominate is from proprium, as here regarded. Man has a proprium which he loves above all things: the dominant or universally regnant element which is constantly present in his thought, and which, through will, makes his “veriest life.” Through this factor, man loves himself above the Lord. By it, he is drawn, so that he lives a life of self. This is that blinds him, so that he is in “thick darkness as to call things of heaven.” Hence, his proprium is called the “sole obstacle to the Divine,”¹⁰⁵ that alone which beguiles him, that which is “dead,” and cannot be changed after death, because it is “the man himself” in the sense in which the term “man” is just now being used.

Yet, from heaven downward into earthiness, there is another approach. There is celestial and spiritual proprium. Thus, the Lord’s vivifying life, heavenly life in the angels, is proprium.¹⁰⁶ Individuality is proprium, and heavenly marriage is in it. All good is in the proprium of the Lord, and proprium is essential to union. In this, its higher meaning, it is freedom, and freedom is requisite, if man shall be led, thinking and willing as from himself. The illusion is that, in this, his deeper activity, he appears to be prompted by that which is merely proper to himself, as if he along knew what is prudent, as if he was merely self-persuaded. It is not primarily a question of receptacles in man, as if man could never be vivified, even by the Lord; instead, it is a question of his *quality* “as to reception.”¹⁰⁷ This is a highly important distinction.

We may venture to put some of these matters in other terms by reference to current expressions. Man’s lesser self is his “mere self,” as we sometimes say. It designates what is “proper” to him, not in the fullness of his stature in the Divine image and likeness, not man in his

ideal integrity, but man arrogating power as if his life were independent. What is proper to man in his lesser self, has no life in it, if we mean the life that enlarges. Man tends to lead himself, as if separate from God and the world, as if he were a law unto himself. So, he seems to be in the light of freedom while actually in a bondage corresponding to night-time. This servitude is especially characteristic of man when under “externality,” identifying himself with things in a mechanized world, apparently as free as the air to do what he likes, although binding himself by his own assertiveness.

In apparent separateness, man takes his lesser self to be his whole self. Hence what he knows, uses, or possesses, seems to be merely his, as if his own ownhood were fundamental. He seems to be original, as if his whole self with all its powers, were his own creation. He appears not only to think from himself alone, but actually to guide himself as if he need never look to anyone else for wisdom.¹⁰⁸ But all this involves self-deception. While seemingly implying love of higher things, it is due to a love entailing manifold falsities. Taken at its worst, here, indeed, is the source of all evil and all falsity. Hence, it is when this phase of the self becomes dominant, that man is “mere evil and falsity.” Regarding himself from this the perverted point of view, man cannot do otherwise than seek evil, turning away from the Lord. Subject to the lusts of the flesh, his own evil is easily reinforced. Not only do inherited evils come to fruition, but man is a prey to “insane and limitless cupidity,” owning no limits.¹⁰⁹

There is no saving grace in this intense self-absorption. The inverted order of life is such that man is unwilling to live or become wise save from himself. All confidence in things and persons is self- confidence. All intelligence is self-derived. Man even attributes all merit to himself. He even mete out justice as apparently his own.¹¹⁰ In this sense, each of us loves the self

first and this element of our nature seeks dominion as if we were never to be other than separate. This is the affection which hardens the heart and closes it to good influences from every quarter.

Since, however, it is only man's will, *by itself*, which is his proprium as now considered, we know precisely what it is in us that perverts, what to avoid, and how to utilize our understanding as "not guilty." As man in self-isolation has "no will for what is good," it is desirable to have a new will due to Divine life in him. Then, he will attribute the evils before mentioned to their actual sources, instead of blaming other people. Hence, from the outset, man is bidden to face and frankly acknowledge his will as sheer evil, in the sense above indicated, so that he may realize once and for all why the Divine cannot dwell in anything "proper" to him, what hell is and why. Since, then, in the last analysis, nothing blinds man save himself, the last opportunity for evasiveness is gone, all pride of intellect is undermined. Knowing the root of all trouble in himself, man is in a position to consider what else pertains to his nature, what is affirmative and promising.

We may distinguish, for example, between evil desires due to the flesh, intruding on the will, and the will to abstain from them awakening within us when the light of Divine truth begins to shine. Only the proprium of the will from the first birth is evil. Proprium resides in the natural man, never in the spiritual (save in the heavenly meaning of the term). It pertains especially to what is sensuous, when man is immersed in self-intelligence, in natural light, serving "externals" as if these were worthwhile. What is thus man's own, as adverse as it is, can be vivified by Divine life. In the will from the second birth, there is no (evil) proprium at all.

The element of value, then, in proprium is this: without the appearance that man acts as of himself man could not be free, could not so attribute his conduct to himself as to see that he

has been in bondage to externals, and subject to evil desires. Every man constantly appears to be in his “own self” in this respect, tries to think and will from self alone. And, in the darkest moment as “receptacle,” he seems to be as evil as these appearances imply. But the Divine in him is carefully separated from any proprium militating against it. The larger, truer self, is lifted above the “mere” self, is never immersed in evil proprium as if sundered forever from Divine life.¹¹¹

While no man can purify himself from evils by his own power, nobody can be purified apart from powers apparently his own. Unless his powers were in some sense his, man could not fight against the flesh and its lusts as alien to his better selfhood. Unable even to think about his spiritual combats, man could then be restrained only by external force, civil laws, worldly justice; since his mind would be open to every sort of evil. Knowledge of that which is specifically *his own* is given that man may actively resist evils by powers seemingly in every respect imaginable inherently his. These appearances are for the sake of man’s eventual regeneration.

Seen in this promising light, man’s proprium is the essence of his life, even the love of his internal will.¹¹² When man seems to be the sole agent in evil, this is not the case, for there are also evil influences at work upon him. Man does not exist solely from what is native or perverse, not even in his apparently isolated selfhood. He is also man from what is “inseminated” into him. So, he may be a good and true man from goods and truths, although an evil and false one from evils and falsities. From his self-awareness man, indeed, observes only what seems to be his, even goodness and truth. Hence, he may mistake himself for a deity. For the conceit of self-intelligence goes very far, indeed, in its claims. But proclivities to particular evils are to be distinguished from evils actually committed, insofar as the latter are attributable to the given

individual. So, too, we should discriminate between what is discordant in man, and the tendency to look above self to the heights of spiritual reality. The latter tendency is no less truly part of man's makeup. By appeal to it, man can be withheld from evil so that the Lord is present with him.¹¹³ Man can be led through his lesser to his greater self, and his proprium is virtually destroyed when vivified.¹¹⁴

The moral of our analysis is that man should never regard himself in mere isolation: that way, death lies. He should look up: that way, even his lower nature can be tempered and sublimated by truths and promptings to goodness. Thus, a heavenly proprium can be formed. Man's endeavors toward self-improvement are instrumental. Granted this preliminary change, the lower proprium can be put off when we enter heaven.

Man is not, of course, aware of his lesser self as evil until he knows his greater in the light of spiritual truth. Nor does he know from experience when he is being withheld from carnal proprium, that a new will may be formed; or, when he is lifted above his proprium, since he does not feel it.¹¹⁵ But when he attains spiritual consciousness, he knows that the Divine is his true life, and with celestial consciousness comes perception that the Divine life is the imbuing power: man, then, no longer desires his own. Thus man realizes that his true selfhood is given him by the Lord, that his true "own" is Divine in origin.

Since it is reaction against life tending toward goodness and truth which generates trouble, perversion due to man's unenlightened self, not to his whole self, it follows that the faculties man uses are not in themselves perverse. Man is ignorant of his true estate when he sets himself against goods and truths. While then such opposition is, in itself, "utterly unworthy," so that it may be said to spring from an element of his nature wholly "vile and filthy," we should

also note that the “life itself of man . . . is from celestial love; there cannot possibly be anything living which does not derive its origin from this.”¹¹⁶ The constructive clue is always the same. Even when man seems to turn on his own volition toward Divine influx, he is being withheld from evil influences, his proprium is being offset or purified. When he appears to be acquiring a new will in his own freedom, it is the Lord working to achieve. Hence, man’s whole experience is to be evaluated by what his faculties were first designed for, what Divine Providence is working to attain.

Man’s will, in the last analysis, is therefore far more than the bare fact of proprium would ever lead us to suspect. Proprium is, in fact, a descriptive term. That is, it is included in this psychological study, instead of relegating it wholly to theology. Man, “left to himself,” has this propensity. Everything seems to be his own. In that state he is at liberty to think what is false in support of what he then prefers. While he wills it, and does it, it is evil. And, in general, man is free to deem himself separate and apart in many respects. No one can deny that we have this privilege. Further, man can even act “as if” utterly separate. If we did not take this illusion seriously—sometimes make a delusion out of it so that our cosmos becomes “all ego,” in the “delusion of grandeur”—we probably would never carry our will into execution.

But this separateness is neither the fact, nor the truth, concerning matters of fact. The isolation is merely apparent. Not even when man uses all the subtleties of confirmation by means of falsities and fallacies of which he is capable, does he really isolate himself. Nor, is there any ground for alleging that man’s freedom is an illusion, hence, that when apparently free, he is really cut off from his fellowmen and from the Lord. Every function he possesses is transmissive. Whatever man does, he participates in Divine life and in the life of his fellowmen.

Man's situation is indeed complex, as we shall see more clearly when we come to the discussion of freedom and responsibility. Man is able seemingly to be self-isolated. But he is also really able to compel himself, and self-compulsion is plainly different from being compelled. Where his freedom unreal, he could not be reformed; but if he were not in his freedom participating in the Divine life, he never could enter into that freedom which is freedom indeed. Man is free even in his temptations, more free than before his temptations began. His true selfhood is being strengthened by these contests. The Divine goodness is never with him to compel him. But man in his larger selfhood can compel his lesser. Man as divinely created is far more than man as heredity discloses Him. Hence, we return to the truth that "man is from understanding," with reminders of the doctrine of remains: these *remake* if they do not "make" the man. As more than brute, man is far more than proprium. What is stored within his knowledge is as truly a part of him as the Divine image and likeness wherewith he was endowed by creation. What is "proper" to man in a lesser sense is always his proprium from a viewpoint which he should honestly admit. It is from the Lord that man has the name of "man" in the greater meaning of the term.

Psychology naturally takes its cue from the teachings which prevail in a given age. Once, man was said to be "depraved," with no hope in him. Nowadays, he has "complexes," and evil has been refined away, so far as language is concerned. One of these is the "ego-complex," man's ruling love, as dominant through self-centeredness. In the present doctrine, affections and falsities implying a ruling love constitute what might be called a complex. Formerly, one heard more about self-assertion and self-preservation: the adverse aspect of these is here termed "self-love." Again, one hears about inhibitions as detrimental to personality. Our doctrine finds an equivalent in externalities, fallacies, falsities, obscurities, and all other states which check the

promptings toward goods and truths. The general principle is that, whatever a man does from freedom, in accord with his thought, is appropriated as his and remains with him.¹¹⁷ The process of appropriation is the crucial consideration. Man appropriates what belongs to his spirit and heart, what thus enters his life and becomes his, what he consents to and wills.¹¹⁸ Hence, the central issue in human personality, with reference to one's future, is not that of the mere presence of proprium as a heritage of our past, but what can be removed and what cannot. Obviously, there is a great difference between our habitual complexes, and the deeper factor of our nature which is decisive in our salvation. Hence the vital significance of the two types of ownhood, coupled with the possibility of appropriating to ourselves only what favors the heavenly "own."

Chapter 37

The Nature of Evil

Ordinarily, the question of the origin and nature of evil lies outside of psychology. But in a teaching in which the self is described as vitiated by adverse traits, infected by proprium, and infilled with self-love, the inquiry inevitably passes over into the adjoining issues. It is impossible to complete the analysis without giving fullest recognition to efforts wrought in man's mental makeup by evil and sin. In fact, we have found it difficult to describe any phase of the inner life without passing over into the domain of moral judgments.

Although innocence, for example, is said to have been instilled into man from his birth, man was also born with evil tendencies and inclinations which remain quiescent during infancy and early childhood, but become active later. We also noted the emphasis put on evil desires of several types, man's proneness to fallacies passing into falsities, thence, to the confirmation of what is false, so that it makes for evil. Again, we could not account for disease except by reference to evils from which it springs and the adverse influences from the spiritual world by which disease is reinforced. The analysis of self has brought us to the point where only another approach to the idea of man could save our inquiry from passing wholly into the field of evil and sin.

If enlightened concerning the nature of evil from the beginning, man might have lived by the Divine order, his interiors open to celestial influx. Hence, man would have been unmolested

by the lusts and other desires on which evil thrives. Accordingly, we have been describing man by appeal to what he might have been, what he ideally is in spirit. But, in actuality man, was born in ignorance; he began his development greatly handicapped by ignorance, weighed down by proprium, tricked as it were by his own will and his own freedom, while also impeded by various inheritances. Through his freedom, meant for better uses, man broke the continuity of good influences where goodness was most needed: he took himself to be independent, and so, fell into the falsities of this unfortunate idea, bringing upon himself sorrows and evils due to separateness. This separation from Divine influences was equivalent to a denial of God.

Man is able not only to turn from the Lord by an act of will, which closes his interiors to influx, he can pervert the lower parts of his understanding by giving these a “twist.” Unsoundness of mind follows. Man even closes his capacities so that will and understanding are not will and understanding in essence. He, then, loves by separation instead of by conjunction, therefore by self-love. Finally, he wills to be wise from his proprium, contrary to reality, far removed from the Divine order.

This is the power of reaction which is native to him, inborn in the very mind wherewith he, at first, wills and thinks, the mind which acts against his spiritual mind.¹¹⁹ The pleasures associated with evil as readily follow as the falsities which reinforce them. The mind, once separated in its confirmatory processes, even the rational faculty supports what will prefers. Perversion of power that might have been instilled in behalf of what is good follows hard upon this intellectual confirmation. Accordingly, goods and truth of celestial origin are either “suffocated” or repelled, shunned, or hated. The mental state of rejection of Divine Goodness is followed by bodily deeds in correspondence. The spiritual mind is shut closer as the process of

denial goes on. Man's latter spiritual welfare is, indeed, jeopardized when evil is confirmed by falsities.

Since it is native to the natural mind thus to set itself in opposition, evil is traced to the "sensuous part of the mind," which finds support in memory-knowledges. Thus, evil functions as love of self or hatred of the neighbor. Man's infernal proprium is the evil consequence of this perversion. Latent in every spark of love of self is love of dominion.¹²⁰

The general origin of evil is from abuse of rationality and freedom; the actual origin is in the individual who commits sin, thereby inducing evil on himself as a certain quality. The other factors are described by appeal to proprium. Through increments, the same evil frequently recurs, becomes natural, and is transmitted as habitual. Through will and thought, hereditary tendencies towards evil are appropriated: the evil is in the will, and secondarily, in thoughts confirming it. The endeavor latent in a will that is given over to evil, may adjoin itself to the man even when he is doing good. This is observable in the satisfaction sometimes taken when evil befalls another person. The root of such evils may be deeply hidden. Even the inward form which receives goodness and truth from heaven may be depraved and distorted. The good man uses the same powers to confirm goods and truths which the bad one abuses by confirming evils and falsities.¹²¹ Good and wicked men have the same capacity for freedom.

There are certain differences, however, between men whom we distinguish as good, and those who are evil because of the dominion of the natural mind. The capacity to understand (rationality) does not come into action until man's natural mind reaches maturity. This qualification suggests that mental defectives who commit evil deeds are essentially immature. While everyone is able to lift his understanding into spiritual light, the natural man who is in

evils and falsities cannot raise it above the upper regions of his natural mind, rarely as far as the border of the spiritual. The reason is that the delights of his natural love become effective. Here again, evil is due to impeded intelligence. In this state, man is able to confirm what he pleases.

We note, then, that all evils and falsities, whether inherited or acquired, reside in the natural mind.¹²² Since this mind is open from birth, while the spiritual mind is not, man in his native state is at a great disadvantage: his very mind, so far as it is in evils and falsities, is said to be a “form and image of hell.” By creation, man’s will and understanding pertain to heavenly affection, but, by subversion, these faculties are turned into the abuses of self-love and love of the world.¹²³

Man’s first state, acquired by inheritance from his parents, is, accordingly, the first clue to the psychology of evil.¹²⁴ Much emphasis falls on the enjoyments which confuse him so that he knows not that he is in evils. Thus, he mistakes pleasure for goodness: goodness should be distinguished from selfish loves and the desire to rule over all which so readily assumes the form of love for goodness. Were it not for this misleading enjoyment, man would not confirm himself in his baser affections, with the evils which flow from these. To remain in his first state, would be for man to refuse entrance to those heavenly influences without which there can be no regeneration. With contemplation of heaven’s joys as possible for him, man begins to enter his second state. The thought of God as source of these joys is likely to follow. We see then the importance of the psychology of joy.

Sin is evil, due to love of self and of the world; it is “disjunction and no conjunction.”¹²⁵ Since sin, thus, radically disjoins, it is disjunction from good, both a disjunction and a turning away from the Divine, thus, from truth as well as from good. It involves separation from the

Divine order, hence (in the inverted order thus implied), inversion in actual conduct following upon an attitude of opposition. To sin is both to think and to do what is evil and false intentionally. Through heredity, man is born into the sphere of sin, and unless regenerated, he remains wholly in that sphere.¹²⁶ Since sins are due to disunion, they cannot be remitted in an instant or suddenly wiped out; but can be overcome only when union with the Divine is restored. Repentance is imperative, followed by a life according to Divine precepts, that the sins may be removed only through faith and love. To repent, is to see one's sins for the hideous deeds they are, to abhor them as utter evils, and will not only to abstain from them, but to become so constant in one's fidelity to Divine influx, that one shall never relapse into those evil ways. To repent, means actually to desist from doing the evil deeds in question. This resistance involves the state of dependence on Divine goodness which we have emphasized from time to time.

It is not, then, a mere question of what is sometimes called moral "disease." What comes into thought only, but not into will, is not sin. To sin from ignorance, or some overpowering concupiscence, is not to have sin imputed to one's self as doer, but the deeds in question have not been proposed to one's self or confirmed.¹²⁷ The real evils in question, then, involve not only passing lascivious or obscene thoughts but adulteries, thefts, murders, frauds, unlawful gains, hatreds, revenges, lies, or revilings.¹²⁸ To detest these evils, is to open the way for goods and affections to enter, especially when these sins are seen to be sins against the Lord, and when such evils are shunned. Man is to desist because sin in itself is nefarious, is contrary to the Word, thus to religion.¹²⁹ Thus, it is plain that sin is not loosed save by the formation of a new life, subsequent to confession and the separation and casting out of evil in every sense of the word. This being the first great step, this inward renunciation of the evils, the actual purification is due to faith and love from the Lord; for the Lord takes away sins from those who actually believe in

Him and, thus, show readiness to abide by his precepts. Obviously, merely oral confession that one is a sinner would not be repentance in this, the complete meaning of the term.¹³⁰ The psychology of the process as a whole is brought clearly before us, when we realize the importance of *seeing* that the evils are sins, of willing to have them removed and, thereupon, desisting from them (as from ourselves) by responding to life from the Lord.¹³¹

We have noted the emphasis on heredity in preceding chapters. This doctrine has psychological bearings by reference to connate tendencies toward particular evils and intellectual predilections for falsities which vitiate mental life. Whereas, man might have been born rational, he is born defiled by heredity and, to that extent, he is wholly evil.¹³² The term “heredity” covers everything which parents have contracted by frequent use and habit, until it has become familiar.¹³³ The interior heredity is from the father and is permanent; the external, or corporeal, is from the mother and is dispersed when man is being regenerated.¹³⁴ Man’s involuntary life is attributed, in part, to his heredity from both parents, and this phase of his heredity is said to become effective if man does not permit himself to be regenerated.¹³⁵ Whatever hereditary evil descends upon us is to be attributed, first to our parents, then through these to their parents in direct succession. What is extirpated during regeneration is the evil which is due to the nearest parents.

Hereditary evil does not consist in doing evils: its influence is seen in the tendency to think from this evil as a motive. Residing in the will as an endeavor, the evil attracts its like if permitted to enter a man’s actual conduct. Man needs to guard against the possibility that stored hereditary evils, quiescent in childhood, may become active when his growth reaches the point where conduct arises from understanding as well as from his will. Man should not be blamed for evil thus stored by heredity, but only for the actually committed evils when will and

understanding function from motives traceable to proprium. The proposition that the “hereditary with everyone is evil,” with the further statement that the hereditary with man is love of self and the world, puts the matter in the clearest light. Psychologically we are concerned, therefore, with the same problem of loves which we have found to be central from first to last. The doctrine is not that the hereditary element is unmitigated evil, but that what is derived from the father and mother is “defiled” with hereditary evil.¹³⁶

There is opportunity here for careful discrimination. For the qualifying statement is that the “good with man is from a twofold origin, namely, from what is hereditary . . . and from the doctrine of faith and charity.”¹³⁷ In actual practice, much depends on discriminations in favor of inherited tendencies which can be utilized for the good. Since “many enjoy natural good from what is hereditary,” it is once more evident that what is hereditary can be assimilated. The limitation is that, thus far, “man is not gifted with any conscience,” since this quality or faculty does not originate from hereditary good. A good life from what is hereditary is insufficient to yield an ethical standard. What is needed is a life of faith and charity to break the evil factors of heredity.¹³⁸ Man continually tends to yield to hereditary inclinations and must guard against these, lest he confirm them intellectually, and through his will succumb to their persuasions. Meanwhile it is encouraging to note that hereditary evils do not hinder the appropriation of the good.¹³⁹ Since the evils into which man is born center about his inferior loves, he has an intelligible clue to follow.

What is to be condemned is not the faculties we use. Man is permitted that measure of adherence to heredity which is essential to his moral development. “From his hereditary, and thus from himself, man would have no life, unless he were allowed to be in evil.”¹⁴⁰ It is not legitimate to infer from this proposition that one may, therefore, indulge in evil that good may

come. Nor does it follow (in terms of Alexander Pope's optimism[‡]) that "whatever is, is right," that "all is good, there is no evil" (as Christian Science has it). Evil is still existent in exceedingly subtle and persuasive forms. But the evil in man is to be attributed to motive and deed, not to the doer as if there were no possibility of dedicating his powers to higher ends. The clearest statement is that there is an element (*proprium*) which, originally due to heredity, is to be fully taken into account in the light of its antagonism to what is good. Man is given insight into his *proprium* when it is wise for him to see it, in contrast with a saving goodness, that he may admit his love of power, his tendency to dominate, to possess his neighbor's goods, and despoil his enemies. Man must know that he tends to extremes, even to reaction against the Lord, that he may fully acknowledge the scope of his moral problem. He should also realize the inadequacy of his hereditary natural goodness. Once aware of the power of evil over him, he is prepared for the qualifications of the statement that man's heredity is "nothing but" evil. This proposition has proved to be so decidedly qualified that, for the individual, it becomes a question of inclinations, their sources, the tendencies that are eligible, and the wisest way to utilize these, especially when it becomes a question of a higher type of good.

Looking back over the ground we have covered in the study of the self, *proprium*, evil, and sin, we notice that verbally this doctrine bears a strong resemblance at various points to the old-time doctrine of depravity. Yet this doctrine is not an absolutism. Propositions which seem to imply an unflinching pessimism are offset by others tending toward a new hope. Man is not "totally" evil. His *proprium* is not his whole nature, not his interior selfhood. His self-love is his lesser or inferior love, prompted by his natural mind. He is not an utter sinner, because he never sins with his whole nature. There *is* hope in him, since he possesses all requisites for reformation

[‡] English poet Alexander Pope's (1688-1744) *Essay on Man* articulated the values of eighteenth-century optimism. His writing spoke of God's infinite wisdom and of mankind existing in a world that was supposedly perfect.

and regeneration: his spiritual remains have been laid down with this end in view. Each term is susceptible of psychological analysis and, with the entrance of psychology, mere generalities disappear. This will become clear if we dwell on other positions involving the idea of man.

From one viewpoint man is said to be of himself “dead, and in him there is nothing but evil and falsity.”¹⁴¹ “The whole man is composed of mere cupidities and the derivative falsities. . . . That which is his own is nothing but falsity and evil. . . . Of himself man cannot but do what is evil and turn away from the lord. . . . Man alone of all created beings lives contrary to order” and his life “consists of entirely contrary loves.”¹⁴² The reason is that man is in the delight of the loves of self and the world. Indeed, he is so weighted down that there seems to be no recourse, save to yield to the perverted order of his inborn nature.

Yet, when the description reaches its uttermost, the alleged absolutism proves to be relative to certain conditions. It is only the natural man, who, “born into the opposite of order,” into the sensuous, continually lapses and is surrounded by evil influences because his will is evil. Man is “nothing but evil” only so far as self-love dominates. If, in one of life’s situations, man “tends continually to the lowest hell,” so that he seems “like a little hell,” regarded from another point of view he is not “born into actual evils, but only into an *inclination* (italics ours) . . . with a greater or less proclivity toward particular evils.” Hence, man is like a “kind of very little heaven,” and, so long as there is any good in him, he is lifted above hell. Although born into the opposite of order, man was born so that he might be brought into order.¹⁴³ By virtue of the Divine image and likeness, he is in power against evil and falsity: the Lord is always with him, giving him power to understand truth and will what is good.¹⁴⁴ There is no one so far sunk into the abyss of selfishness as to lose the last vestige of goodness. No man could ever live without some element of innocence, charity, or mercy in him. Nor is man essentially human because of

his tendency to err and sin, but because he is so formed that the Divine can be in him. Of far greater moment than the darker facts concerning the natural mind, is the glorious truth that man's spiritual mind is, in itself, a form of heaven, its essence love, its inmost vitality from the Lord.

Since scarcely a doctrinal statement concerning man is to be taken by itself, it is equally true psychologically, that man's whole selfhood is to be taken into account, with his proprium referred to its proper place, his isolated self, offset by his social, his natural mind by his spiritual. We read in one passage that man is purely a receptacle which, in itself, is "dead"; but the term receptacle, we have seen, is used with reference to man's ability to assimilate life according to his quality.¹⁴⁵ He possesses faculties which are to be regarded functionally. He is a living subject with substantial forms. He is able to adopt attitudes and cooperate dynamically, giving precedence to his internal selfhood, true to his nature as a spiritual being. While his external is "dead," his internal principle is alive: the former is separate, the latter may be conjoined. The one is in bodily heat, the other in spiritual love. The one, clothed with a physical body, dwelling in the sphere of representations, possessing the seeds only of goods and truths, with no knowledge save memory-knowledges, is subject to an evil proprium, and tends to what is corporeal and sensuous; the other is the spirit which clothes itself with the body as a temporary garment: it possesses actual goods and truths, may acquire a heavenly proprium, and tends to inmost realities on the spiritual and celestial planes. The former is, indeed, subject to man's state. The latter has before it the possibilities of both reformation and regeneration.

Over against every proposition on the natural side, is to be put its ideal corrective on the spiritual. Man, as natural, is not capable of any perception of the Lord, but only of the world with respect to his practical adaptation to it. Man, as celestially quickened, is capable of open vision of Divine realities. Man by his own (natural) reason, is unable to discover that Divine influx is

the source of his life. Man, as spiritually enlightened, is instructed where man, as natural, is dense. The external man is, in the last analysis, “not a man, only the figure” of one.¹⁴⁶ The internal (which means being wise from the Lord) is *what constitutes man*. The constructive clue is always to be taken from above, in the truth that “God is in man, from the inmost, and in his life.”¹⁴⁷ And even in man’s last extremity of evil, “if he does not live according to Divine order, still God is with him, but in his highest parts,” giving him the power to understand truth and to will good.¹⁴⁸ The Lord, then, is omnipresent by a continual struggle. Over against the natural man’s status as “nothing but evil” we, therefore, put the quickening truth that “in the internal man” there is “nothing but goods and truths which are the Lord’s and in the interior man’s conscience.”¹⁴⁹ The minimum degree of bare existence involves “something living” in man. And since “no man is exactly like another,” this minimum cannot be grasped without knowing the man. Hence, we may well give each individual the benefit of the doubt. Then, too, “the Lord wills to appropriate to each one what is His own, and to give to everyone eternal happiness.”¹⁵⁰ Man, as thus regarded, can never die, “because he has thus been implanted in the Divine, and is therefore in what is eternal and infinite.”¹⁵¹

Psychologically, many considerations turn upon the fact that while man is living in the body, he is living “as to his spirit” in the spiritual world, *while his body is in the natural world*.¹⁵² Born into both worlds, his mentality is adapted to both. So created that, as to his spirit he can actually be with the angels, this is a cardinal fact to be put with the other fact that, “born into the opposite of order,” he must be “reduced to order.”¹⁵³ Man’s midway position between good and evil—hence, in a state of tension amidst opportunities for choice—is such that his entire mental life in the natural world is twofold in outlook, subject to disjunction at any point. He is by nature, by Divine purpose, and appropriating “organ of life,” persistently guided without being coerced.

Hence, choice is imperative, to bring the suspense to an end. Meanwhile, wherever he turns he is “consociated with his like in the spiritual world,” never alone, but encompassed with a certain spiritual atmosphere in accord with the life of his affections.¹⁵⁴ And always, the particulars of his life are so intimately connected that, seen by the Lord, they act as one.¹⁵⁵ Hence, in the simultaneous Divine action upon inmost and outermost, there can be no mistake.

If this were not enough, there is also the truth that the Lord speaks with every man, but altogether differently with different men. This is in accord with the perfect adaptation of His providence. To this truth, we may add yet another: the relationship of the Lord through remains, which, in turn, also make a man to be a man. The Divine itself, in the last analysis, can be in nothing but the Divine, and so must have a residue of the Divine-Human through which to reside with all. Man possesses an inward Word “written on the tablet of the heart.” This Word may become active through teachings brought to him, through inner experience, and through thought on spiritual marriage. Thus, through various ways, there is always a channel into which the Divine influences can flow.

We observe that the purport of the intensely realistic descriptions concerning evil is fidelity to the facts of evil in both worlds, put in the language which was current in the eighteenth century. In our day we find difficulty in identifying the actualities by the description, notably in case of such terms as proprium and concupiscence. The terminology applied to man’s lesser self has wholly changed. It used to be said that man sinned because of faculties which were utterly evil in themselves. Hence, there was a certain absoluteness in the condemnation heaped upon him. In our day, we know that every state or process depends on conditions. Neither on doctrinal nor on psychological grounds is it any longer intelligible to condemn any human power outright. We wish first to know how far it is a question of ignorance and excess through

misuse of power. Nor, can we utterly condemn any natural thing which man utilizes. The same wine which is the occasion of evil in one connection, may be instrumental to the sacrament in another. The same money which, used in one group of relationships, is loved so that it exemplifies the saying that it is the “root of all evil,” is a means to a very good in another connection. The present doctrine makes clear both the dependence on conditions and the part played by uses. Hence, it is very modern.

The doctrines that some people cannot be regenerated, that man must remain what his prevailing love has made him in this world, and that the paternal heredity cannot be overcome, belong outside of our present inquiry. Psychologically, we are concerned with the emphasis on outermost as the test. In the natural world, man is best able to come into tangible contact with matter and evil. Hence, his mental life here depends on such desires and affections as we have passed in review.

Crucial for theology, rather than for psychology, is also the teaching that, while the paternal heredity cannot be overcome, in woman all adverse factors can be thrown off (hence the necessity of the virgin birth). So, too, a great deal depends on the doctrine that “everyone’s soul is from the father,” while, in the mother, the soul is “merely clothed with a body.”¹⁵⁶ The soul, then, is the “seed,” for “from the seed is impregnation, and the seed is what is clothed with a body by the mother. The seed is the primal form of the love in which the father is; it is the form of his ruling love.” Plainly, these are purely doctrinal statements, dependent on other portions of the doctrinal system as a whole.

The same is true of statements with respect to what cannot be accomplished after death, namely, the doctrine that the “essence or nature” which a man makes in this world, continues

through all subsequent relations.¹⁵⁷ This is because man's life "has been organized according to his love."¹⁵⁸ If changed, the organism would be torn to pieces. "A change of the organization is possible solely in the material body, and it is quite impossible in the spiritual body after the former one has been rejected."

Thus the outermost plane affords the clue to the psychology of evil on the nether side. On this, the visible or tangible plane man can best see enacted what is in him, can best face and admit it; can most effectively will to have what is adverse transformed. Hence, the great value of the present existence in the flesh. Here, indeed, is man's great opportunity for coming to judgment and realizing the value of the spiritual life. It is well for him to see the vital significance of his prevailing love, and to see that here is the field for testing this affection to the full. Man is kept in equilibrium that he may make his choice.

But no one is condemned unheard. There is no provision for all who die in infancy and for the unfortunate, also for a decisive coming to awareness in the intervening experiences just after death. The doctrine is offered in fullness of explanation of many matters hitherto passed by, notably in case of the large concessions made to life in the body and the influences of the ultimate plane.

Chapter 38

Goodness and Conscience

At times, our quest for the soul seems almost to have been lost in a forest where the paths are not only numerous but far from promising. In one direction, there are endless “spheres,” with evil spirits lurking in dark and lonely places; in another, diseases and their ascendant woes, miseries, and subtle spells. In a third, the terrors are due to gruesome heredity, with the suspicion that some of its influences may never be thrown off. Again, there rises a doubt whether one can make headway in any direction, hampered as the self is by shortcomings, intruding its proprium, handicapped by inclinations to evil, liable to sin. In whatever direction we may explore, the mind may be confused by self-love, obscurities and falsities, with possibilities of hell looming all along the horizon. How is man ever to resist adverse forces sufficiently to foster the development of character? Certainly neither education nor environment will settle the issues. Few traits in human nature seem truly eligible. The adverse forces appear to be much more powerful than any impulsion towards the good. Of what avail is even man’s highest aspirations?

Still following clues which belong in part outside of psychology, we may venture to discuss certain ethical issues which are closely allied with man’s mental life as a whole, for example, the nature and function of character. By this term is ordinarily meant the union of our natural tendencies with man’s own efforts and achievements, tendencies which have been selectively modified, intensified through worthy conduct, and aided by education through personal contacts with the moral opportunities which “try men’s souls.” The chief emphasis

naturally falls on the home, the school, and society, with its precepts and conventions. Character, as acquired, and is defined by contrast with disposition and temperament as native. As an individual achievement character makes man a moral being, in contrast with animals and abnormal individuals as “non-moral.” Therefore a great deal depends on the ethical conception of personality as the source and efficiency in the making of character. An ethical theory is apt to stop with humanism, with scarcely a saving reference to God or to religion.

In our doctrine full recognition is given, as we have seen, to dispositions, desires of every type, evil inclinations, and all the adversities due to self-love. By disposition, man tends to confirm whatever increases and makes secure his love of power. There is no impetus which passes over into the sphere of character, as if by appeal to moral “values” alone, man could conquer whatever is alien to the good. Mere “personality,” as usually construed, is not enough. All decisive powers are spiritual, from above, by virtue of man’s creation in the Divine image and likeness. Goodness is not merely “natural,” as some of the ancients maintained. Character alone never saves man. Moral and civic relationships are always inferior in degree.

Man does, indeed, possess character. But this is known from his ruling love as the essence of his life from which his conduct follows.¹⁵⁹ If man’s dominant motive is self-love, such evils follow as those which express the coarser emotions, notably hatred, revenge, cruelty. But, if the ruling love is for the neighbor and the Lord, the ensuing conduct corresponds; for man’s endeavor tends strongly to realize in action what his love has chosen. Character, although implied, is secondary to the good. To discern its place and function, we must be mindful of man’s essential relationships as a reactive rather than as a creative being. To admit a doctrine as true but to do nothing towards carrying it into practice, is to receive no benefit in terms of character. If purity and unselfishness result, the ethical value lies in the Divine truths and goods

to which such motivation is due. To have conscience and live by it is the test, not the mere possession of a doctrine of conscience.

If man is affirmative with respect to goods and truths, with at least a moderate desire for what is noble and true, this trend of his will can be fostered by Divine influx. The Lord continually labors with man to make the utmost of his recognized element of goods and truths.¹⁶⁰ He is resident in man's freedom and rationality, to aid any tendency to choose what is good and at upon what is true. Moreover, as the Lord continually withdraws man from evils, there are always opportunities for man's cooperation. In man there is a reciprocal element by which he is able to respond in the interiors of his nature. With his inward response come further promptings, which, if taken, will lead on to additional opportunities. Much depends in each instance on man's acknowledgment that Divine life is in him, to aid and sustain where he needs help. For with such recognition comes greater evidence of the reality thus admitted. Acknowledgment in actual deeds is plainly of greater moment than intellectual recognition.

It is ordained that there should be a common good from which each man receives his own good.¹⁶¹ Each receives so far as he loves this common good. This is equivalent to loving his fellowmen. The neighbor stands for the good to be loved in fellow citizens, society, one's country, the Church.

We lay stress on this teaching that good is not to be done for the sake of character, as if character could save. Nothing in man, as such, saves anyone. To make character our goal would be to seek self-realization. Hence, we would be concerned with aids to self-development, culture, refinement, favorable social influences, and education at large. Each of these would be called a

“good,” to the neglect of the truth that salvation is from the Lord alone and only the Lord is good.

To do good to others from the love of truths and goods as Divine in origin is a far higher incentive than the usual motives for service. Man is so influenced that he has continual opportunity thus to respond to Divine promptings, by admitting the good into his life so that he shall become constant in attitude. Thus, to himself when he might have asserted self-love, is to do his part toward the development of his higher nature. This higher nature, explicitly defined by appeal to what Divine goodness has wrought, is man’s spiritual character, which is a degree higher than “moral” character as usually understood.

Self-realization cannot be the goal. Mere expression is not the guide or clue. Man can never of his own volition make himself good, not even by aid of all our modern enlightenment. His hereditary endowment holds no hope of freedom through self-mastery. The self, in its native estate, is for the most part an interference. Only when man permits Divine goodness to occupy the central place in thought, will, desire, imagination, feeling, endeavor, prayer, worship, and preparation for reformation and regeneration, is there permanent hope. Then, indeed, this Goodness can enter his life from within, selecting any favorable tendency, offsetting what is adverse; and welding into unity those traits which are worthy (man himself knows not what is worthy).

There is, by Divine plan, a standard of constancy of character. But this is a unity of will and understanding, it is not in any sense due to man. Man has no power to grow into moral perfection by any initiative of his own. The odds are tremendously against him, so greatly in excess that he tends to lapse into self-love whenever he tries the issues of his life on his own

responsibility. He may well begin where he will eventually end if his quest is thorough, coming at once to the conclusion that all goodness is one and inseparable.

All goodness then is Divine. In effect, the idea of his goodness as source of all “goods” has figured constantly in our analysis of higher mental states, notably in tracing the development of the functions of knowledge. The good is the basis or source of the true; it is prior, while truth, as posterior, is of, and from the good. So the truth with man is precisely according to the good with him. There is a love of both the true and the good, but the love of good is decisive. There is both good and truth of all doctrine, but the truth is dependent on the good as more intimately akin to faith; to be in the good of doctrine is to be in the truth.¹⁶²

It is from good, as a principle, that man has spiritual perception while truth is that from which he thinks when thought is in its higher degree. Hence, all real enlightenment is from the good, truth being, by comparison, the “form” of good. Truth looks forward to the good as end and soul. Indeed, good operates from the internal man, causing the affirmation of truth. Good could not flow into what is negative, into a state of doubt; it must first prepare a favorable state or affirmation.¹⁶³ The good then manifests itself through the love for the true, which implies not only love of truth for the sake of knowledge, but for acting in accordance with it. Granted the affirmative attitude, “innumerable things accede.” These are then filled with inflowing goods.

Since so much depends on the favoring states of the spirit, we note here as elsewhere the importance of innocence, of the love of charity in which the truths of faith can be planted.¹⁶⁴ The quality of the good turns upon these states. With the love of good as the beginning, with volition from the heart to do what is good, there follows the inflow of good into thought.¹⁶⁵ There is no power in truth by itself. As prior, the good is one. It is truths which can make the good

various.¹⁶⁶ All goods, in turn, imply love and charity, which are therefore to be regarded as inseparable from the good. But it follows that goods without truths would also be impossible.

The relationship of priority holds not only in the sense of continued dependence as essential to existence, but because the good as the source of the active principle which leads from knowledge to conduct is also the source of the impelling purpose which makes goodness specific. In brief, the good is what acts, and “all good is of use.” No one can know what goodness is unless he knows what love toward the Lord and the neighbor is. Hence, those who are in a “state of good” are more interior according to both the quality and the quantity of good in which they are. This is why height is predicated of the good.¹⁶⁷

Since the good from the Lord has Divine power in it, it is good from the inmost in man. The good with a man makes his heaven, is the source of the three goods which are essential throughout: the good of faith, of charity toward the neighbor, and of love to the Lord.¹⁶⁸ The doing of genuine good is from the love of the good according to these essentials. To love the good is, in essence, to love the Lord. Since all love desires the good of another, love toward the neighbor in the sphere of practical conduct readily follows. The Lord, being goodness itself, we may use the term “Lord” with new meaning.

Goodness also involves a relative meaning in man’s lesser self-hood. For man, there are goods defined by his self-love, love of power, of worldly possessions, wealth, also things in general sought because of natural desire or custom. Such goods are, of course, external. Then too, there is a state in which man supposes he does good from himself, as if he were independently good; whereas internal good is invariably from God through love to the Lord and the neighbor. In the broadest meaning of goods and truths, there is nothing unrelated in the

universe. This is particularly true with respect to the sphere of practical purposes. But the same distinction holds here as elsewhere: the good as explicitly internal is a higher degree.

There are, for example, civil and moral goods. Spiritual good, implying willing and doing good from love to the Lord and the neighbor, attained through the truths of faith, or as related to charity (in the Word), belongs to the higher degree.¹⁶⁹ No one ever manifests spiritual good as really his own: the good or truth flows in from the Lord, although both the good and the true may seem to be man's own. Man must ostensibly attribute both to himself, that he may appropriate and put to its highest use the good and the true. To draw the finest distinction is to note that the good (regarded as nearly by itself as possible) is the good of the will; while the good of the true pertains to the understanding. Moral and civil goods are learned through contact with the world. These are not goods strictly so-called, for man in his worldliness is implied in them. Yet, he who is in spiritual good, is also a moral and civil man in the sphere of his relationship with the social world in which he lives. This sphere is not, in itself, in conflict with spiritual good. The difference is that spiritual good is the essence, while moral and civil goods have their existence from the spiritual.

It follows that the good makes the man himself. This follows also from the principle that, what man loves, determines his life. In a general way, everything which is loved is called good, and in a sense every man is his own good. But no good which men do from themselves, as such, is good, because such goods are really done for the sake of self.¹⁷⁰ We recognize the fact, then, that goods with man are "altogether various," so varied indeed that the good of one man is not identical with that of another.¹⁷¹ This wealth of response to goodness is not, however, to be attributed solely to the contrasted affections, love for self in one direction, or love toward the Lord and the neighbor in the other. For the variations are specifically due to truths with which

goods are conjoined; since the quality of the truth is always a factor and, in this case, the distinguishing factor.

We may illustrate by the types of social service in which people engage. There may be an equal love of the good in a dozen philanthropies. Yet, the quality of the good in actual operation, will be determined by the theory and practice in each case. Much depends, therefore, upon the principles adopted by different people in thinking out and applying what they deem the good. Here, as elsewhere, end, cause, and use, are inseparable.

Pure good unmixed with evil does not exist with man, nor even pure truth.¹⁷² Every good has its opposite evil.¹⁷³ This is an additional reason for noting the inferiority of moral and civil goods, the variations due to man's apprehension of the truth as the form through which the good is individuated, and the possibility of deflection from the straight and narrow way due to interposition of self-love. But we may infer from the doctrines, in general, that knowledge or truth is, in most respects, decisive.

As Socrates long ago taught, knowledge is a virtue that, with the increase of wisdom, man tends to do what is right; so our doctrine leads one to believe that a primary difficulty is ignorance. With increase of wisdom concerning man's nature as spiritual, it is probable that, when the truth is seen, man will tend to live by what is spiritually good. Moreover, emphasis falls progressively on doctrine, with the expectation that truth concerning Divine goodness will bring love of that good, therefore, thought according to it, then conduct or life.

We may emphasize this conception of the good by restating it. Heaven is said to consist of as many likenesses of the Lord as there are of angels. The basis of this great wealth of response to Divine life is mutual love—love through which each man loves the other more than

himself.¹⁷⁴ It is this mutual love which primarily unites the external man to the internal, when love of self then recedes. It is the Lord's life in man through the affection of good and the love of his fellowman. This love, because of its mutuality, is contrasted with love toward infants. Love of this type cannot be described as loving the neighbor as one's self, because it is love toward the neighbor surpassing one's self. This is why the whole of heaven is regarded as one man—one because all men are consociated through mutual love from the Lord. Love to the Lord is, thus, the life of heaven. Mutual love is the soul from this life.¹⁷⁵ This is more than friendship. It is more than ideal love between two persons. It is far-reaching mutuality as the type of Divine good. Given this idea, we see why no principle or mode of character-building as usually understood is adequate.

Conscience

Although conscience is an ethical term, it is commonly used to represent a constituent of our higher nature in general. Human conduct, for better or worse, is affected by our conception of conscience, as well as promptings to righteous conduct attributed to it. Moreover, in our doctrine, man's moral nature is not sundered from the rest of his mental life, as if it belonged to a different category. Our present interest, therefore, is to note the mental plane on which conscience appears and its function in man's progress.

This doctrine is to be distinguished from the ethical theory known as intuitionism, the view that conscience is of the nature of "innate ideas," also the theory that conscience is a God-given "faculty" uttering what is final, and from the "moral sense" theory. It is also unlike the view that conscience is a gradually acquired instinct or ability due to racial moral consciousness. Nor does it accord with the popular idea that conscience is a "voice" directly speaking from

within, as if by an authoritative immediacy. Only the inmost in man is immediate. This direct relation to the Lord is both prior to, and above, experience as conscious. Moreover, conscience is not in the inmost degree, but lower, than either celestial or spiritual perception.

But thought from perception and thought from doctrine found in the Word does, indeed, come clearly into view on its own plane, and this is the plane of conscience. Moreover, conscience may be understood, by contrast, with the plane beneath it: the mental level on which there is no conscience at all in case of people who, disregarding all inner guidance, do not suffer themselves to be led by what is good and true, but admit what is evil and false.¹⁷⁶

Psychologically, conscience is various, is associated with all sorts of beliefs, precepts, doctrines, and systems. Formed within a man according to his religion, it differs as religions differ and as these are received.¹⁷⁷ It is also formed more directly by the truths of faith from the Word, or from doctrine out of the Word, by virtue of man's responses in his "heart."¹⁷⁸ It is seen in its nobler guise when a man, knowing the truths of faith, wills and lives by them so that conscience is formed in full measure. To have conscience, is to speak and act from the heart, thus, to be interiorly in a state of unity of understanding and will. Those who are more enlightened in the truths of faith are recipients of conscience in greater fullness, and the consequent perception is purer. Conscience is also due to the receiving of a new will from the Lord. Indeed, such a will is, itself, conscience: to act contrariwise would be to deny both conscience and will, to do what is against Divine influx.

Since conscience is formed from revealed truth, from knowledges from the Word with their derivative doctrines, it dictates (originally) not "what" is true, but *that* it is true; and is to be accepted because the Lord has said so in the Word.¹⁷⁹ As a dictate it comes into antagonism with

what man tends to do from his mere self. The combat which man feels gives rise to the stings and torments of conscience. When charity rules, man is prevented from acting contrary to the truths and goods of faith. Conscience is fostered by means of the good of charity formed by the Lord in man's understanding, by virtue of good deeds done by man "as from himself."¹⁸⁰ Again, the freedom of the spiritual man is ruled through conscience by the Lord. He who is ruled through conscience, or acts according to conscience, acts freely. Nothing brings greater upheaval than to act against conscience. To act contrary to it is, indeed, hell; whereas tranquility and internal blessedness attend upon the man who acts according to conscience.

Conduct against conscience is possible because it is formed from the intellect, and is, thus, sufficiently separate from man's volitions so that he does not necessarily will and do what he knows. As "implanted," it is a principle to be reacted upon, assimilated first by the understanding, then by the will; and there may be delay or opposition between the understanding and will. Again, no man is compelled to act from conscience: his action is not merely intellectual assent but also by readiness of will. Furthermore, there is a conscience of good and a conscience of justice.¹⁸¹ The former is that of the internal man which means conduct by reference to the precepts of faith from an internal affection; it pertains to civil and moral laws by appeal to external affection. The former includes the latter, but the latter alone implies only the capacity for receiving the conscience of good, also the actual receiving of it when the requisite instruction has been given.

In a relative sense conscience is formed from all matters which man takes to be true and regards as allowable.¹⁸² Everyone supposes, for example, that his own dogma is true, consequently, that it is a matter of conscience. But, since the truths of conscience are various according to a man's religion, a criterion is called for. It is necessary, then, to distinguish (1) *true*

conscience, formed by the Lord, with the resulting thoughts, will, and deeds as tests; (2) *spurious* conscience, formed with Gentiles from their religious worship, by aid of tradition; and 3) *false* conscience, formed from external things, through love of self, when a man thinks he is injured, or through undue softness of heart.

There are two planes on which are founded celestial and spiritual principles from the Lord, as interior and exterior planes of conscience.¹⁸³ These are essential to the celestial and spiritual in general: to be without the plane, is to be without conscience in that respect, ignorant of what conscience is. The good and the true actuate the interior plane, and what is just and equitable, in the proper sense, actuates the other plane. It is the outermost plane related to this exterior plane which appears as conscience. But this is not conscience in reality, since lesser motives come into play. Man is ruled not only by the principles of these two planes, but also by motives of honor and fame, for the sake of the world's wealth and possessions, also through fear of the law. Those who have not been regenerated are ruled through these worldly motives. The evil are also regulated in this way. With the regenerate, these three planes act as one.

Those who have conscience are held by the Lord in thinking well about the neighbor, and are withheld from thinking what is evil. Hence, the sign that conscience exists is love toward the neighbor, with right thought about the truths of faith.¹⁸⁴ Charity makes conscience distinctive. Righteous thought, with the doing of what is right is to be attributed to love for the good. If, for instance, truth has been implanted in the rational mind from infancy, this truth, with its reference to the good, will lead to perception which specifically pertains to conscience.¹⁸⁵ Conscience and faith are so nearly akin that, to say one, is to mean the other. The law "written in the heart" is conscience, that is, perception of goods and truths, conscience being the inward acknowledgment

of the truth. Conscience regarded as implying a new will from the Lord means the Divine presence with man.

Our doctrine is distinguished, then, from theories of conscience as a human faculty by its appeal to the mode of implantation of goods and truths, leading to the perception arising thereby. It is also distinguished by its reference to conscience as a principle which involves a plane such that man is withheld or guided by its influence. Conscience is definable as an interior perception of good and truth.¹⁸⁶ He who acts according to it, is sincere. But conscience in action is twofold: with reference to (1) what is interior (spiritual truth and good); and (2) what is just and fair.¹⁸⁷ Conscience itself is an interior plane in which is terminated the influx from Divine goodness. This is perhaps the better practical definition, since it associates conscience with its efficiency. For, in practical life, one should distinguish between the good as attributable to heredity, and life according to the good as due to Divine influx.

Conscience is far from being a “voice” which, on demand, tells us either what is right or what is wrong, or what we should do or refrain from doing. For emphasis falls on spiritual reflection, discrimination, or insight, as surely as on the response to Divine influx which discloses the good. This perception of the moral principle through influx is not to be had for the asking: it is a reality to grow into by careful distinctions between worldly and Divinely quickened motives. Growth into it also turns upon acquiring truth from the Word, and on persistence in ruling out spurious and false elements.

Otherwise put, this is an intellectual view of conscience, in contrast with ethical theories which put emphasis on feeling or describe conscience as a moral “sense.” The criterion is not found in moral sentiments. Conscience is not attributed to a specific good derived by experience

from the external world. It is, instead, attributed to Divine goodness according to the doctrine of knowledge in general: conscience would be invalid without this, its Divine sanction. It is the stamp of Divine authority upon social and civil experience which establishes the power of conscience. Thus in case of the Commandments, already existing as social precepts before they were inscribed on tables of stone, it is the Divine sanction added to sanctions already accepted which made the Commandments imperative as rules of conscience. So, too, the Word as a whole is a source of conscience, which is then formed in man's spirit by virtue of his fidelity in abiding by the Word. Man is able, therefore, to increase the power of conscience by accepting truths which favor the interior plane in which the influx from the Divine goodness is terminated. Conscience does not increase by social contacts or experience; but these supply opportunities for response according to principles already laid down from within. Man's nature is such that he can, thus, respond to Divine goodness.

Hence, this doctrine would be incomplete without recognition of ethical principles defined as inseparable from the other principles of man's life. Man is, by Divine creation, in the image and likeness of goodness and truth, *a moral being*. As a moral being in civilized life, he is distinguished from man in his savage state, and we need not look to prehistoric man, emerging from kinship with the animals, to find the beginnings of conscience. The moral law descends from above. It is not evolved from below. It is universal in authority or dominion, and its universality is that of Divine truth as revealed to man and given heavenly sanction.

Chapter 39

Social Psychology

The emphasis on doctrine as essential to goodness in Swedenborg's teachings is enforced by the social psychology implied in the idea of the Grand Man. The central thought is that all who constitute the heavenly orders of society are seen by the Lord as One Man, whose form with its members and organs corresponds to the visible form of a human being. Thus, there is a spiritual and celestial sociology implied in the psychology. This principle of relationship is developed by correspondences between man's social functions and their representative places in the Grand Man. Thus, a group standing for a certain function, corresponds to the hand, another group to the lungs, and still another to the heart. The societies (with their functions) taken together, form a whole, as the human body with its head, arms, legs, trunk, and organs constituting a system. Hence, social groups corresponding to the heart and lungs are vitally essential to the welfare of the social organism in the life of which they participate, each organ contributing its function, and every function essential to all the others.

The idea of the Lord as Divine-Human underlies all knowledge of man as created into the Divine image and likeness, without appeal to which neither sociology nor psychology would be complete. The central clue in either branch of inquiry is found in the principle that the varieties of reception of goods and truths from the Lord bear a relation to one another corresponding to that subsisting between the organs, members, and viscera in (physical) man, whose organism is

the type or form taken as the clue to the doctrine in its entirety.¹⁸⁸ Unless we understand the *form*, we will be unable to avoid confusions between spiritual and worldly things.¹⁸⁹

Since all heavenly societies are arranged according to this form, the Divine humanity being envisaged by the Lord as One Man, all social groups on earth corresponding to heavenly societies should be envisaged from what is above to what is below. One might inadvertently take the clue from forms in space and processes going on in time, because we always visualize the human body in space and think of its three score years and ten. Instead, one should start with *heavenly interiors* wherein nothing whatever is perceived by spaces and times, but by states, their variations and changes, to which all psychological processes are due.¹⁹⁰ The timeless and spaceless heaven itself is the Grand Man, primarily “because it corresponds to the Divine-Human of the Lord,” who is essentially man.¹⁹¹ We are, thus, given a discretely different idea of man the human being, for even man is to be understood from above in proportion to “what he has from the Lord,” not because he possesses a garment of flesh and blood, with “a natural human face, brain, and body and members,” all of which will die as the bodies of animals perish.

Yet, even the statement that “man is man from being able to think and will as man, and thus to receive what is divine,” is subject to misapprehension if we take our clue literally from personality when trying to picture the Grand Man. Naturally, we put the idea of personality above that of all functions, such as doing our work in the world, or engaging in service in behalf of the needy and suffering; for we anticipate the rewards of our labors and like to be known as doers of good works. Moreover, we as naturally love the Lord as a Person, neglecting the works to be done from love toward the Lord and the neighbor. At first thought it seems remotely impersonal to say that “to be a man means to uses to the neighbor.”¹⁹² But, the difficulty is that we do not take the complete doctrine into account. There is nothing higher for us than to fulfill ur

function in the sense in which the term “use” is here employed, in the great cooperation which implies the heavenly societies. Personality, in the highest sense of the word, is implied. So, too, love for the Lord is inseparable from service for the Lord’s sake. To love Him simply as a Person would be merely to love Him from one’s self. True or complete love continually goes forth and returns through deeds; these deeds are “uses”—uses imply persons, and services for the neighbor from the highest motive includes love toward God as Person. Whatever else we mean by personality, as here employed, the term signifies that the Grand Man consists of uses rather than of persons; since the word “person” is so apt to involve neglect of *the quality of the use* and the quality of the *affection*. It is the spiritual idea, rather than the natural, which gives this insight into man. Given the idea of the discrete degrees of difference between spiritual qualities and loves, and natural qualities and loves, we may indeed envisage man by appeal to the bodily organism as a representative; but we should *think* of man as a use.

Limiting our study to the form or extension of the Grand Man, to bring the complete picture before us, we may bring this idea into relation with conceptions that have passed current by noting such a well-known term as the “body politic,” the mass of people under the rule of a certain type of government. We might speak with greater truth of the “body spiritual,” the Church, of which the Lord is the true head. The body would then be said to act under command of the head, not of itself; it would consist of all those groups which, though varying in type and utility, are united through mutual recognition of truths and principles of goodness. The city of man on earth, with its corporate religious institutions, suggests both the “body of Christ” and the “city of God,” so familiar in Christian history; also, various ideas of goodness which in part imply the Grand Man because goodness is admittedly “organic.” The individual is not, then, good by himself. Nor does goodness exist for him as a mere individual; the individual exists in a

relation of mutual dependence with many other individuals as fellow-members of the corporate whole, each of whom is like an organ in the intimacy of heart to lungs. Organic goodness thus calls for social psychology in contrast with systems of mere self-interest, however “enlightened.” No individual is complete by himself. Yet society has no existence save as a union of individuals.

The general principle is that all who enter heaven are members of the Grand Man as organs of life manifested through them. This view is unlike other conceptions of organic goodness, because it takes more seriously this relationship between organs as disclosed by correspondence, and because it bases correspondence on the doctrine of the Lord. All parts of the human body are said to correspond to spiritual and celestial principles in the Grand Man. They also correspond to what is general and particular in man’s character. What is celestial corresponds to the head, what is spiritual to the body, and what is natural to the feet.¹⁹³ The correspondence also includes spirits and angels, each being an image relating to the Grand Man.

The heart of the Grand Man is constituted of those who are in love to the neighbor, the lungs to those who are in charity from the Lord, thence in faith.¹⁹⁴ Those in external goods and truths correspond to the rest of the viscera and members. Hence the correspondence pertains to both internal and external principles, to the three degrees in man, with relationships to the three heavens; and with all things in nature. All who are in the Grand Man remain in a constant situation, according to the quality and state of the truth in which they are.¹⁹⁵ Heaven as thus articulated, has different provinces and regions, recognizable by reference to the organs and members of man. The varieties in each individual’s response to heavenly life are such as this psychology as a whole indicates, with the stress falling upon both love and function, the type of interior reception, and use or social expression.

Granted the general view of heaven, envisaged first of all in its complexity of arrangement in series, orders, and degrees, with the appropriate planes of descent, the simplifying idea is that each man is “a little heaven in least form.” Furthermore, all the societies of heaven, though innumerable and various in type, act as one.¹⁹⁶ Each man is, in essence, an image of Love and Wisdom, whatever else is true of him. Thus, it is possible for the universal heaven to be imaged before the Lord in its totality, corresponding point by point to His Human, despite the surpassing wealth of forms and functions. Grouped by regions and provinces, by reference to the functions fulfilled by those who love applied goodness and truth, man is likewise grouped in organic relations, as already indicated.

The Grand Man, although not an assemblage of persons but of cooperative functions, is not in any sense a mechanical system. At first thought, this Man seems like a vast army, with its closely articulated system in which individuals are mere units. But the Grand Man is a vitalized organism, not a mechanized scheme of parts commanded from one office, or by one official. The Lord sees the *Maximus Homo* in a totality of interconnection as a complete system of organs and functions, because it is what is universal in us that make us profoundly akin. Wisdom and Love organize by actuating what is most real, enduring significant in man, in contrast with the particulars which separate. Thus, there is an appeal to what is still potential in man on earth where (acting as relatively separate persons) man has opportunities to respond to the Providence which wills to make a heaven of the whole human race. There is, then, a Divine activity through heavenly forms to the individual man on earth, with his several organs and functions, his possibilities as a spiritual being. This descending life meets the ascending activity through corporeal forms toward that point where man may make the great decision to love the Lord and the neighbor. If we keep the order of descent distinct from the order of ascent, we shall more

nearly appreciate the configuration and unity of the Grand Man as “a form impressed by the Lord on the heavens, thence on the things that exist in man.”¹⁹⁷ We may then make allowances for those unspeakable realities which render the heavenly form “amazing,” quite surpassing all human intelligence, “far above the ideas of the forms that a man can possibly conceive of from earthly things, even with the aid of analysis.”¹⁹⁸ What does come within ordinary human ken is the practical use which commands the forms of goodness, also the variations and changes which are perceptible by means of spiritual states.¹⁹⁹ The use existed before the organic forms of the body came forth; these forms were called into existence to fulfill certain ends.

What, now, does it mean to be in the Grand Man? It means to be in love to the Lord; in charity to the neighbor, doing good to him from the heart, according to the good in him; with a conscience of what is just and fair; and according to the quality of the good of the man thus belonging within this heavenly Man.²⁰⁰ Who are not in this Man? Those who are in the love of self and of the world, who do what is good only on account of the laws of the world, with respect to self, honor, and the various objects of worldly life; who are interiorly unmerciful, in hatred, revenge, out of correspondence with one or more organs and members in the body; and those whose lives are contrary, who are not assimilated or organized.²⁰¹

Is the society of the Grand Man an aristocracy? It seems so at first glance, since it is constituted of those who hold true doctrine; and since those who are reformed on earth are few, indeed, in comparison with those who, because of their prevailing love, cannot be reformed to all eternity. But a list too long for enumeration and analysis of those not in a state to be reformed on earth qualifies this forbidding aristocracy. No one can be reformed in states of spirit who does not spring from liberty and rationality;²⁰² but the number of those who are unprepared, and yet to be tested, is enormous, including imbeciles suffering from conditions for which they are not to

blame, people incapable while here of making a rational choice; those in states of fear, misfortune, bodily disease, ignorance and blindness of the understanding (this statement covers myriads). Various states of sickness, for example, impede reason so that it is not in a free condition. No one can be reformed in a state of ignorance, because all reformation is by means of truths. Hence, much work remains to be accomplished after death, before it shall be determined what ones enter the Grand Man.

Moreover, even doctrine fails to be decisive unless its adherents live as it teaches. Meanwhile, “all who have lived a life of charity are in heaven.”²⁰³ The conduct of life with reference to the precepts that the Lord ought to be loved above all things and that the neighbor should be loved as one’s self, is the test.²⁰⁴ Doctrinals are not faith, but pertain to it. The truth, in order to live, must be introduced into the will, that it may there receive life.²⁰⁵ If, then, doctrines, as someone has recently said, are not “mere formulas of faith,” but “principles of action,” the assurances from which we think must be made good by “living the life.” We must consider these principles, and make them truly our own. In this sense, doctrines help us to choose and to take right directions (toward heavenly provinces). But, granted the light of doctrine shining in our path, we still have to “look for the path with our own eyes . . . and to walk in it with our own feet.” Everyone is granted this opportunity.

Doctrine, as such, has been called a “statement of the laws of man’s life as they exist in the constitution of his spiritual nature,” and everything depends upon realizing the doctrine in the sphere of conduct. This sphere, as we are now regarding it, is essentially social. Preparation for life in the Grand Man is something far more than individual self-knowledge or individual action. Psychologically, it might be said that we are all in process of finding ourselves as social beings.

Spiritually, we have scarcely begun to know ourselves as possible organs fulfilling constructive functions in the Grand Man.

Yet, Christian teaching long ago began to make us acquainted with at least the ideal of such relatedness. It is implied in all the Gospels, especially the Gospel of John, in the teaching concerning the vine and the branches. It is explicitly stated by Paul in his epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians. It lies at the basis of the teachings of the Christian ages, in so far as emphasis has fallen on membership in Christ. It has been impressively confirmed by many of the teachings of the special sciences. What is most significant in the present teaching, is the conception of the systematic correspondence of men as organs and of their work as a function such that the internal spiritual state is a clue to the whole structure of the body spiritual. Thus, the Grand Man differs from Hobbes' "Leviathan," in which multitudes of individuals also constituted a *Maximus Homo*. It differs, too, from any type of articulation of functions turning upon a biological conception of life. For the correspondence of social function to bodily organ is always distinguished from literal relationship by appeal to the essentially spiritual, or eternal principle, of the Divine image and likeness. It is obvious that any comparison between bodily organs and spiritual functions, as in Paul's classic description, is in some sense merely figurative. But it follows, without question, that *all goodness is organic*. Man has neither goodness nor life of his own. He is dependent both on God and on his fellow men. Any good he may do is contributory, or it is not good at all. We are, in very truth, "members one of another."

When we read that man was created in the image and likeness of God we are apt to think of the individual only, and neglect this great truth of the Grand Man. It is difficult to avoid the idea that, as the *Maximus Homo* is described by appeal to correspondences with the human body, this saying refers to an external image and likeness. Then, too, when thinking of the relationship

typified by the vine and the branches, we do not always pass from the Lord, as Vine, to the disciples as members in a system as intimate as that of the branches. We are apt to stop with the favored group to which we belong. This limitation of the idea is partly due to the fact that, for generations, Christianity has been identified with a plan for individual salvation; we have not extended the ideal to include humanity in all its bearings through varied social relationships.

To adopt the idea of kinship with the Father through the image and likeness into which we were created ought rather to mean that we conceive of the human race as *being now created* into the Divine image and likeness, since God dwells in the heart of all humanity and guides mankind as a whole. God is “our” Father. In Him *we* live, and move, and have “our” being. He is not, alone, the source of those promptings which make for inward worship, for freedom and development within the individual according to type, but the source of manifold social promptings. There can be no complete individual freedom until freedom shall become social. So, too, the union of Lord and disciple in the vine and branches is, in the truer sense, typical of spiritual friendship or service, of gifts quickened in all humanity by the same Spirit. The Lord naturally emphasizes the function of discipleship, since it is the disciples who are first to carry the new gospel to the world. But the teaching of the Gospels is essentially a social gospel, and is meant for all who shall receive the glad tidings. As the individual can be truly understood only through the purpose for which he was called into being, so mankind, as a whole, is intelligible only through the end to be attained by all; and the present system, makes this end graphic by its imagery of the Grand Man.

The symbolism of the vine and the branches makes still more vivid this idea of group-love and cooperation. It reminds us of the well-known fact that men and women readily assemble in social units according to their mutual interests, occupation, religion, and national ideals. We

find people drawing together in groups within groups, so that the larger the social whole, the greater the number of small units. While this tendency is, for the most part, due to local or private interests, and is oftentimes simply for private gain, in its better part it implies the true social ideal. We need to disengage our thought from the idea of national affinity or external social relationship entered into for the sake of politics, commerce, or some other social reason, and see that there is a inner relation growing into spiritual affinity. Since, as spirits, we already live in the spiritual world, we are already in a measure members of spiritual societies. Our real social grouping is that which will withstand the sundering incidental to death.

We note impressive instances of the drawing-power of common interests, for example, when war threatens a whole nation, when the flag means more and the governmental principles become more precious, so that people lay aside petty interests in mutual zeal. Plainly, such groups are known by the ends they serve. Fear, lest the enemy overwhelm the nation, is the ostensible motive, yet, the nobler prompting is the real end. From the thought of this earthly grouping in behalf of what we most love, we may readily pass to a grouping through mutual affections that are more than earthly. The life of charity or service sometimes becomes the standard even amidst activities which seem limited to physical welfare and safety. Our psychology leads us to make as emphatic as possible this conception of men regarded as *essentially* social beings, as created to respond socially to love for one another. The next step is to envisage these groups within groups so that, regarding all humanity in the light of God's relation to this social spirit, we may say with a recent writer: "His heart beats with infinite love and life within humanity's heart, giving pulsations to it: his lungs breathe with infinite wisdom and power within humanity's lungs, giving respiration and power. And so in every particular it is true that in Him humanity lives and moves and has its being. Every vibration of mind and body

of humanity is in correspondence with the Divine vibrations of love and wisdom, life and power.”

To keep close to these the warm and loving thoughts of God’s relation to us is to avoid making a mere generality out of the doctrine that God sees all heaven as One Man. The thought that all who dwell in the same spirit make up one house naturally suggests the same kinship within the city, thus, in the province and the regional relationship of provinces, where all are doing good to the neighbor from the heart. Those who are outside this ascending and enlarging series, are literally detached units, asserting themselves over against the universal. Meanwhile, within each spirit, however great the seeming independence, there is from infancy on through manhood a guidance such that this heavenly relationship is the one great solution of all difficulties. Ideally, speaking, then, we see how it can be true that God “rules the race as one Man,” even as the soul rules the body. For, man could not subsist in the spiritual sense of the word unless he were, thus, under guidance as an organ of life with the highest destiny. There actually is one influx of life into all amidst “unspeakable variety” in the reception and expression of this influent life. Ideally, therefore, man is already a many in one. He actually becomes a one, in a sense recognizable by him, in so far as the manifold activities with him are mastered and used through complete union between will and understanding such that this union is, in turn, social (organic).

We already know our fellowmen as merchants, artisans, or workers in some other special sense in which they contribute and are being contributed to in occupations which, at least, symbolize discipleship in the Grand Man. Thus, the welfare and happiness of all is even now in some sense the welfare and happiness of each: mutual love is at least one of the many motives, however great the social discrepancies. If every one of us were contributing his part in true

mutuality in the social order, we would have the perfect objective type before us; and from the objective, we could proceed in thought to the interior. More or less failing to think and will and serve from this mutual motivation, we suffer in proportion to our departures from the standard. In this unresponsiveness and self-assertion, man opposes the very Life which is creatively striving to make him truly a member of his fellowmen within the *Maximus Homo*. Man was born for the sake of others. He is unhappy so long as he fails to do his true work in this affection for his kindred.

How would a workman proceed if inspired by the idea of membership in the Grand Man? He would realize above all, that as the disciples were summoned from ordinary occupations according to fitness to be as intimately one with Christ as branches are with a vine, so everyone is called who does something useful to society regarded as an organism, insofar as his motive becomes heavenly. The impetus, or inspiration, which this realization would contribute, cannot be measured. It puts work in all its serviceable forms and types on its true basis and makes a spiritual art of it. When sweeping a floor or laying a wall, when gardening, stoking, repairing, the standard would be: Work as well done as possible for the value of the brother man who, in turn, is related to his neighbor and, thus, on into the fullness of the heavenly relationship. It would not be primarily a question of the hours or the pay, the external conditions of labor, or any of its consequences in conventional terms: it would be contributory work well done in the richness of spiritual motives, the laborer being worthy of his hire, and the remaining conditions to be regarded in the light of his higher type of service. It would be found that there are many kinds of work done by many methods under differing conditions such that no merely external standard could be regarded as decisive. There would doubtless be freedom of individuality and, in a measure, quality of opportunity; since justice would be done to all. But these matters would be

seen in the light of capacities or individual talents. The type of work and the type of man doing the work would be judged by spiritual standards, with due regard for the effect of the work on the worker.

To be particularly guarded against in seeking to grasp this doctrine as a whole, is any tendency to disengage the values of the natural functioning of man, even though not vitalized in his individual heart, from the great cooperation.²⁰⁶ Even when individuals as units do function from motives of local or private interest, they are still, in some measure, doing the Lord's work; and this is true even if the individual man makes his bed in hell. Hence, there is a sense in which we are unable to get away from the Lord's work, however we try. Thus, as a devotee of this doctrine puts the matter, when we:

“settle down to do from self-interest what we are unwilling to do from love of the neighbor we are in the hells ‘reduced to order,’ and even there are in the great cooperation. Now as I understand it this world is not in correspondence with heaven or with hell, except ‘through the chinks.’ It is in correspondence with the world of spirits, so that we can be held in equilibrium for our choices. As fast as men get toward their regeneration they pass into the other world. But even this [our present] world is a vast ramification of cooperation, operating under heavenly and hellish motives at the same time. We cannot tell the good men and the evil apart oftentimes, and their uses for the common welfare may be of equal value. . . . This great cooperation of good and evil is functioning for the Divine Order, and is in its own imperfect way in the form of man. This . . . gives our love of the neighbor more to catch hold of, more to value in the human imperfection, more companionship to rise with toward the heavenly cooperation.”

Uses

The special term employed to emphasize the practical character of man's social work is "use." Through "uses," that is, serving others, which is "willing good to others and performing uses," we *actually* serve, instead of adhering to the doctrine that we "ought to serve."²⁰⁷ From the Divine purposive activity, all life has been communicated to man; and the structure of man's inner nature is such that everyone, whoever he may be, must perform a function. The good of his neighbor, the general good of the community, and the good in God's kingdom at large, is put before him as the great end to which all practical activities should lead. The "use" then is service: God's kingdom in its universality is explicitly a kingdom of ends and modes of service for the good of the human race.²⁰⁸

In every created thing there is this endeavor to produce the activities for which it exists. Thus, even in outermost, things such as stony, saline, oily, or metallic things in the mineral kingdom, there is implicit both the end and the beginning of all these activities.²⁰⁹ The end is the endeavor to be what the thing was created to be, as the bud tends to burst into the fully open flower and produce fruit after its kind. Grasses and herbs, plants, shrubs, and trees constitute a higher level of ends than minerals. Hence, the vegetable kingdom is the middle one: things in that kingdom serve each and all things in the animal kingdom, nourishing and vivifying the bodies of animals. Thus, the animal kingdom is "first" in rank, in contrast with the vegetable kingdom as "last." So, in turn, there are series from lowest things through the middle, to the highest within the animal kingdom. Thus, it is, that man is highest in the scale of created natural things. The forms for receiving life on the various levels constitute the basis for service of each thing.

Whatever life or thing comes from the Lord, thus, has its practical fitness in the scale or system. It is characteristic of life to be for real utility: the useless can have no life and is cast away. The useful is seen especially in doing what is good and true. For the end which a thing fulfills is the good for which it stands in the scale of goods making up the whole system. The form of a thing is, in lesser degree, the clue to its value. A tree, as a form established for certain ends, fulfills a certain service in the natural world. But animals, being higher in the scale, have forms which vary according to the excellence of the values which they embody; and these forms are more explicitly seen as goods. The realization of goodness is the great objective of the whole kingdom of beings and things which manifest Love and Wisdom.

The service is the exercise or realization in ends achieved, in actual deeds making explicit the goods and truths. Thus, the works of charity verify the reality of love for the neighbor which a man professing such love actually feels. The joy of service is in the actual deed done. The value is in the function, and the function has place in the great system of functions in the Grand Man.

Again, the activity which a man loves determines his life. It is not the mere fact of service which is decisive. For “uses” may be infernal as well as heavenly. An evil-minded man may be extremely practical in carrying out his scheme. Rogues, thieves, and villains stand together and constitute a sort of brotherhood. Thus, in external form beings and things may simulate activities which embody worthy ends. We must then penetrate beneath the form, and the bare fact of utility, to the kind of service made concrete in this or that group of deeds, and view the deeds according to their effect on human welfare. Hence, the importance of the motive, the type of love.

Furthermore, knowledge conduces to service; but there are different types of knowledge. Although knowledge may suggest the service, to will and to do is actually to serve. Knowing, understanding, and being wise are not ends or values in themselves; but most have service as their end, and this “use” must be worthy. It is the *internal* man who has been formed to serve the Lord through all the activities which love to God and man demand of us. The soul is to be cared for that it may thus serve, loving spiritual truth for its service-value.

Therefore, not even in the other life is man rewarded for any other motive than for the realization of this central purpose of his being as a member of the race fulfilling a function which, when actually worthy of a reward, puts him within the Grand Man. No man, for instance, is rewarded for his good actions if these were done for the sake of his own gain, honor, and reputation. It is always the end for which deeds are done that is significant. Actions acquire worth in relation to ends. Insofar as man is living for ends, in the larger sense of contributory functions, he is already in the other life. Therefore, the truly useful man is one who, loving the good in his neighbor, works for the good from the purest motive. The term “use” is to be carefully distinguished from mere utility or utilitarianism, as if the highest motive were the greatest happiness of the greatest number. It is always functional goodness, never pleasure, satisfaction, or happiness, which determines the value of the service and its significance in social psychology.

We repeat, therefore, knowing is in a measure divided from willing until we attain their unity through what we actually do. There are many impulses in human nature which conflict with the will even after we have enjoyed special instruction. We often postpone the more serious endeavor to seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness essential to it, because we still cling to the idea that the heavenly order of life begins in the life after death. There is, of course,

no ground for this delay, since the whole of our earth-life is a preparation, and we are each year making ready for places we are to occupy in the ever-dawning future. The heavenly order is not an affair of time, but of affection and service. It begins whenever we will. The spiritual is in process within the natural.

Again, we delay because we idealize the past only, and put true receptivity far from us in the golden days when men walked and talked with God. The race seems to have wandered so far since those precious days that there is little hope. But what is the meaning of this wonderful record of the race's spiritual history if not that each of us is passing through some period in the same history? Of what value are great promises unless they are true for us whoever we are and wherever we are on life's journey?

Since God's world is a kingdom of purposes, the Divine descends into humanity to make us useful individuals, and ascends through us toward the perfect. We have every reason to look to our common promptings and our common occupations for evidences that the spiritual is being brought out through the natural. It is not the disciples alone who, seekers for fish in the sea, are called to be fishers of men, but everyone since our natural life can be transfigured by beauty, love of truth, and the expression of goodness.

One reason we so often fail to take the step from knowing to doing is that we do not put our will into the common natural activities with the realization that we are already in a measure occupying places in the Grand Man. We still put Sunday too far from weekdays, sacred things from secular, heavenly occupations from earthly. In veriest truth, the actual state of soul with each of us, weekdays or Sundays, turns upon *what we love most* and work for. Each of us is already using the will we wish for and believe in could employ so effectively if we would only

arouse it. We are using our energy in other directions. It is always a question of use or misuses, as in the case of one who has inherited a large fortune.

Summarizing, we observe that what is chiefly new or different in this doctrine of the Grand Man, is the new light cast on the whole principle by the application of correspondence as a descriptive law. By this approach, the ideal of heavenly societies, envisaged as one man from the Divine point of view, is more definitely articulated. The approach to social life here on earth, in the light of descending heavenly influences, is also made more concrete, that is, by the correspondential principle terminating in “uses” as means to social service at its best. The functional ideal of society, thus finding formulation afresh, was for centuries the inspiration of Christians. Each man was regarded as a member of this hierarchy of ascending social groups actuated by Divine purpose in creation because of his relation to the heavenly order of reality, and also because, as an organ in the social whole here on earth, he could contribute to the welfare of the corporate groups in which (through the “body of Christ”) he participated. The individual was said to exist for the whole, and the whole for the individual. Our mutual relationships and obligations unite and bind us through love toward God and for man as dwelling with God. This mutuality unites us as denizens in the City of God. The threefold groupings of this heavenly order date from Plato, the idea of Christian membership in the organic sense from Paul, and that of the city of God from Augustine. Swedenborg discloses a view of this organic correlation by more direct appeal to the human body as the type of social relatedness. The problem for his followers is to connect this doctrine with current social psychology. In contemporary efforts for social reform, we find the idea of progressive social betterment substituted for the most part for Augustine’s view. Much emphasis is put on the struggle for social justice here on earth, in contrast with the alleged aristocracy of the City of God.

Chapter 40

Divine Providence

By the Divine providence is signified government through love and wisdom, after creation, for the conservation and maintenance of the Divine order. It is like a continual creation, since permanence involves a perpetual springing forth. Its objective is what is eternal. All things in the universe are held together with this end in view. It is implied in the variety and infinitude of things, in all purposes, in the design of the world-order. Man's whole progress in temporal things looks forward to this eternal state in this supreme relationship. This principle is psychologically significant because, as we shall see, it underlies the entire life-history of the two loves to which man is subject, the equilibrium in which he is sustained, and the contrasts between the heavens and the hells.

Although the efficiency of the Divine providence is all-encompassing, it is necessary for man to know its laws, know the way to heaven, and that he may walk in it; and know what he carries from earth and why. The laws show by what means the Lord cares for and rules the functions of man's will and understanding. For example, the law of man's freedom to act "as if" from himself; the law that the Lord acts upon the whole individual; that the Divine providence guides, bends, and directs man; that it is universal in its particulars; that from infancy to the end, man is led by the Lord in least particulars, his place foreseen and provided for; and that it covers all things. Thus, man may see that there is a way to heaven, through love, that love leads the way; that man is potentially a heaven, an image of the Lord; that heaven is fostered by love of

goods and truths, is the continual aim of the Divine providence; and that the Lord foresees and provides continually what is essential in actual life that man may become a heaven in full reality.

Thus, too, man may see that his part is to permit himself to be led. For, if he suffers himself to be guided, he will continually be prepared; if he objects, or rebels, he will experience consequences accordingly. Of himself simply, man tends to rebel. But, as continually withdrawn by the Lord, he is permanently sustained and guided. It is a law of the Divine providence that he should act from freedom according to reason. Hence, he must be educated to appreciate reason's way. A man might hold the Divine providence as a theory but refrain from speaking from it. He might will, but not do. Not till idea, will, and practice coincide, does he become genuinely spiritual in his responses. His understanding is given him that he may know the laws by which he is guided. Will is given him that he may abide by these laws. What is expected of him is constancy of purpose. His freedom is preserved inviolate through all the illusions of his path. Although apparently lost at various junctures along the way, his freedom is ever guarded.

Divine providence works invisibly in order that man may, through freedom, ascribe events either to providence or to chance.²¹⁰ Yet, although its operation is not evident, it may be *known about* and acknowledged. For example, man must *see* (1) the tendency of love of self and the world toward hell, and *wish* to be led out; (2) that evils are permitted and why, through freedom and rationality; and (3) that he is led and taught by the Lord as if by himself . Otherwise, man might assume that he is led and taught by human prudence, or might conclude that there is an element of chance in his conduct. Again, we might easily assume that we should know all matters in advance, or providence would be impossible. But, if man knew these crucial matters in advance, he would not act from freedom, and nothing would appear to be from himself

The end of Divine providence is this: the Lord created the universe that an “infinite and eternal creation from Himself might exist in it.”²¹¹ This creation exists by the forming of a heaven out of men, to be before Him as one man, in His image and likeness. Hence, the Lord’s providence looks to that which is eternal in man. With this end in view, the Lord provides and disposes all things; some from permission, some from admission, from leave, from good pleasure, or from will.²¹² Thus, it is provided that evils shall be turned into goods; that man is not admitted further into faith than he can be sustained therein; and that no one has more of truth than he receives of goods. The Lord in action in all these respects is providence. He is with everyone, either as “leading” and providing what takes place, or as “turning” events and conditions toward His providence, notably through influx. Thus, some men are continually in “the stream of providence,” continually carried to happy eventuations, especially in case of those who trust in Him and attribute all to Him.²¹³ In proportion as one is in that “stream,” one is in a state of peace. In all present time the Lord is present, foreseeing what is evil, providing what is good, keeping man in the “way,” and guarding him from the falsities of evil.

The crucial point in this nearness is that Providence looks to temporal things, only so far as they agree with eternal.²¹⁴ This shows why many experiences which seem momentous, are not those that are guided toward eternal ends. Acting upon the whole individual, providence pursues ends of permanent value, enlisting man’s “life’s love,” the internals or externals of his thought *when these are significant*. The Lord is able to accomplish this extensive activity because He acts both on inmost and on outmosts. The Lord and man may be very close, indeed, in the outermost wherein man is acting in fullness of power. Nevertheless, by acting upon what is significant for eternal ends, in any event, the Lord also extends His providence to the particulars of man’s life.

To conclude that Divine providence is only universal, hence, that particulars relate to man alone, would be to judge by worldly considerations and, thus, to ignore celestial and spiritual influences. We can never understand providence if we judge by man's lesser motives and pleasures. It would be easy to assume—when we see evil men winning more honors in the world, acquiring more wealth than the good—that providence is remote from single deeds and particular events. But this would be to ignore the principle that, even in pursuing worldly matters, man is actuated by motives pertaining to affections which remain to eternity.

Providence is needed because man has two natures, with affections which pertain even to minute particulars in daily life. Man's two natures are likely to function separately. His two loves are often in sharpest antithesis. Meanwhile, in a state of tension, there is every reason that, what is sundered in will and understanding, should become one, with a marriage of goods and truths. The Lord's providence is, especially in each particular, to overcome the division in man's selfhood. Providence is explicitly the means for leading man to conjunction with heaven, thus, with the Lord. Hence, the reason for discriminating between the "stream" (with what it tends to accomplish in us) and what is relatively unimportant.

How is this union possible? By marriage between will and understanding in any respect in which they fall apart; by union of charity and faith; by doctrine from the Word and life according to it; by acknowledging evils as sins, and willing to have them removed; by not only willing but doing, thus making actual our love to God and man; and by responding to the leadings which prompt us in favor of reformation, regeneration, and consequent salvation.

How may we learn in a practical way what Providence is? By studying evidences of it indicated by the laws already enumerated, not what is submitted to sight as a sign of its

operation. By thinking spiritually, and making allowances for the imagery of space and time. By examining the purposes of all created things, noting indications of Divine Wisdom; noting the unity amid variety in the world in least to greatest matters, no two things being identical; also by observing the respects in which man is superior to the animals, respects by means of which he may be regenerated and saved.

It is imperative that this study begin now. Man is held here in a state essential to reformation and regeneration, if he makes that choice. To receive the truths of Divine providence is, thus far, to be reformed. More important, is the realization that man is held between two affections; since the Lord causes evil and falsity to be serviceable in maintaining this balance, purification is possible even amid conditions apparently unfavorable. Realizing that his affections are manifold, man will naturally wish to be led out of the conflict. But he cannot be held by knowledge alone, by mere intelligence, or even by wisdom: he is led by a life conjoined with these.

Here, as elsewhere, love is decisive. A man must begin by setting his lusts aside. To make the ensuing conduct effective he must put his evils aside as if by himself. There need be no mistake concerning what is central, after all this stress on the love of ruling from love of self as the fountain-head. The external must be reformed by means of the internal, and not the reverse. The great resource is to seek to be led by means of influx and taught by interior enlightenment. Faith will be given that the Lord is directing. There is strong reassurance in the fact that the operation of providence is perpetual, secretly working that man may not perish. Again, a clue is implied in the fact that temporal things are proper to the natural man; hence, by inference, what is eternal is to be sought in relation to what is spiritual.

Finally, there is assurance in the fact that the Lord foresaw from eternity what the quality of each member of the human race would be, that evil would continually increase, with an inevitable trend toward hell.²¹⁵ Therefore, every contingency has been provided for. His foresight pertains even to the “veriest singulars” of man’s life in all these respects. It was imperative that His providence should be thus specific, because even the smallest moment of man’s life involves a series of consequences extending to eternity, each moment being as a new beginning to those that follow. Foresight and providence are equal: goods are provided to offset each evil.²¹⁶ The principle is that nothing is permitted except for the end that good may come of it. This provision, in the “veriest singulars,” is that man may be saved through the factors of existence which we all meet from day to day. We have been studying this providence in other terms in the foregoing chapters; for the Lord’s providence is identical with His wisdom, therefore, inseparable from His love. Moreover, man’s will and understanding as already analyzed, are one with the freedom and rationality which more directly relate to the Divine providence.

Since providence is the guidance of Love and Wisdom, Divine permission being inclusive of all abnormal conditions, we are assured that even in the most trivial incident, the Lord seeks either indirectly to withhold us from evil or directly to lead us to heaven. Hence, we are concerned in daily conduct rather with significant details than with the “big things” theoretically assumed to be only those matters wherewith God governs us. Since no contingency falls outside, our interest lies in the system through which events are brought into place by what can be derived from them for our good. The provision being complete, our part is to cooperate in perfect trust, no longer assuming that there are accidents which might intervene. In fine, no ground is left for regarding the Divine Providence as a generality. There is no excuse for postponing our participation. Indeed, human responsibility is driven home with tremendous

emphasis by the teaching that, even the most trivial moment, involves a series of opportunities running into eternity. Nor, is there ground for evasiveness on the assumption that the lord will do our work for us. Providence being inseparable from freedom, the highest efficiency on our part must always spring from using Divine power in fullness as our own. The dynamic of freedom is identical with the dynamic of cooperation with Providence.

These considerations are reinforced by the fact that equilibrium between contrasted states, loves, and worlds is essential to existence itself.²¹⁷ Here again, psychology yields the clue. For the equilibrium which is essential to the natural world, as a balance between forces—illustrated by the relation of heat and cold, light and shade, dryness and moisture—finds its correspondence in mental action and reaction. In the external world, there is “force,” in the mental world “endeavor,” in the spiritual world, life and will. In the external world there is rest, in the internal freedom.

Ethically, this means balance between good and evil, intensified by the antithesis between truth and falsity. With the good man, the good is acting, the evil reacting. But with the evil man, evil acts and good reacts. In any case, endeavor meets endeavor. Equilibrium between the spheres of influence is essential to man’s moral and spiritual opportunity through freedom. Indeed, this equilibrium must extend into the spheres which await man after death, when the meaning of this age-long conflict shall become clear. Without equilibrium between the two loves (worlds), there would be a preponderance of one over the other without an offsetting resistance. This would be fatal. Hence, the Divine government means equilibrium: this must constantly be maintained because of the numbers of men passing from one state to another, or into the trial state known as the world of spirits.

If it seems probable that the tension between states making for heaven, and those trending hell-ward within the individual, is due to the falsities and obscurities so much emphasized in the preceding chapters, the possibility of explaining evil as due to ignorance is soon dispelled. For, the decisive statement invariably is: “evil and falsities there from.” In narrowing the analysis, we may then set aside the falsities for the moment, since self-love is their root. This becomes the clearer in the states which ensue after death. For, while man is in the world, his evils are “wrapped up and veiled” under semblances and obscurities. But, when all hidden motives and processes are disclosed, the evils show forth in all their vividness, deceit being the worst.

This reference to the other world reminds us that the antithesis between the two loves is carried to the limit in these doctrines. Our seer brought over from his scientific period the scholar’s zest for classification. He is fond of opposites and contrasts, as well as balance and equilibrium. His hells are well organized. There are quarters, regions, and points of the compass. There is a complete grouping to give contrast to the three heavens. Everywhere there is order and system. The inhabitants are relegated to districts, and every provision is made for varieties and types of men. There are appropriate modes of ingress, and no egress is in sight for those who have been assigned to their districts. Countless myriads have already found apartments there, and the walls seem sufficiently durable to prevent escape.

Yet all this is psychology, and static concepts once more yield to dynamic. Although the equilibrium between heavens and hells is a general principle, it is said to diminish or increase according to the numbers entering heaven or hell. Since this amounts to several thousands daily, it is always a changing balance. This is a generalization of the contrast which we have already studied in the inner life of the individual. The equilibrium is, in fact, a balance between *states* or forces in process, as in the interrelations of heat and cold, light, and shade in nature. Hence, the

terms are correspondential. This moving or dynamic equilibrium between vast groups is as imperative as in the individual who is held in freedom because he could not otherwise choose between two loves. It is a question, therefore, of the symbology best fitted for the elaborate description of all types classed as infernal.

We find, for example, that self-love, having been shown to be the prime source of evil, is now characterized as “infernal fire.”²¹⁸ But, as we would expect, this fire is not from an independent energy breaking into the cosmos and threatening Divine Providence itself. The source of the energy is the sun of heaven made infernal by those who receive its radiance so as to suffocate or pervert the heat of love. Here, as in the heavens, perfect law prevails. For “in every instance the result is in accordance with the reception.” Hence, the classification is precise. The genus is love of self and the world. The species is “every lust of these loves.” Infernal fire, in general, is the lust and delight springing from these loves in the totality of their spheres, with the evils flowing from them. The fire of hell is an “appearance” and, apart from the principle of correspondence, it would be unintelligible.

Hell is the life of the mere self in the most intense form. It is utter separateness, in which man’s proprium reaches its limit. The symbology must be elaborate and picturesque in the extreme in order to do justice to the very great variety of species falling under the general head of self-love. Thus, there is contempt of others, enmity, hostility, envy, hatred, and revenge; and from these, fierceness and cruelty. Described in reference to the Divine, these evils are denials and consequent contempt, derision, and the detraction of holy things. Lust from self-love carries love for injuring others who do not honor, venerate, and worship self. Lust excites anger. This leads to hatred and revenge, then to a lust for venting one’s rage. From each hell, there exhales a sphere of the lusts and delights which constitute it.

This is hell, in contrast with the milder states you and I know in our safe concealments. In the spiritual world, no one can resist his lust. This lust belongs to his love, which belongs to his will, which, in turn, appertains to his nature; and “everyone there acts from his nature.” Hell is, thus, a state wherein no one is able to see anything of light from heaven. Granted men in whom self-love has not been overcome in this world, the same disposition with the same delight in practicing cruelties, with the same hatred and revenge, will prevail. The only exception is that the delight will be turned in full vigor upon the one who has harbored infernal motives. Hence revenge and deceit are placed in the lowest hell.

Naturally those who have acted interiorly from evil are in the deeper hells. As naturally the description enters into minute details so that the classification may be exhaustive. Thus we read: “Each one of these evils contains so many generic differences and each of these again so many specific or particular differences that a volume would not suffice to enumerate them.” The hells are so distinctly arranged in order and in accordance with the differences of every evil that nothing could be more perfectly ordered and more distinct. Hence, the hells are innumerable, near to or remote from one another in accordance with the differences of evils generically, specifically, and particularly. There are likewise hells beneath hells.²¹⁹ Since all spirits in the hells are in their “own,” this ownhood *is* hell. We have seen that this is reduced to what man has appropriated by acting upon it from affection. Hell is, thereby, limited to what has gained entrance into the will. Consequently, the gradation of evils which is so precisely described, takes its cue from the principle already noted: thought deprives what pertains to it from memory, will from the life itself, and only that has permanence which has entered through freedom.

Why must the changing equilibrium be watched over with providential care? Because no man, no group of men, however powerful in goods and truths, could ever settle the issues arising

moment by moment, while new candidates are arriving in the world of spirits, and looking toward heaven or hell. For, the evil proprium which has full access to man would drive him with terrible impetus toward hell. Even before man enters this intermediate state, the absorption of many to their own concerns is so intense that, without Divine restraint, they would rush headlong toward the fulfillment of personal desires and affections.

Thus, hell is more or less intense as the inevitable reaction of man's self-intensities. Here in the world we cover these with endless subterfuges, some of which are conventional, others due to the language which was "given us to conceal thought." In the Divine Providence, the exposures must, of course, be far more penetrating than the mere unveiling of social customs and linguistic usages. Every veil must fall away. Every mist must be dispelled. The amassed motives and deeds due to our dominant love-will, as the quintessence of what we have taken unto ourselves, will then be left in full view. It will be impossible under such a situation to allege that our motive was right, that we have been unjustly accused, miserably treated, or constantly misunderstood: while always thinking of others, indulging in self-sacrifice in all humility. What we are at heart, will be shown forth in all its baldness or beauty as the case may be. And what hell could be worse than simply to contemplate the results springing from what we have actually felt, willed, and done in affection for the delight in it when all this is disclosed in plainest reality? How could we advance until we had met the ordeal of this intermediate experience without compromise?

All infernal motives and their consequences belong in a scale. It is a question of intensity or depth, not of extensity, or quantity. Hence, our seer's symbology is rigid to the point of description of hell as if it were a "place" with adamant walls and pressed steel turnstiles for gates. This is because he is depicting the fixity of Divine law. Hell is as much under Providence

as heaven. But granted this knowledge, we are free to infer that its perpetuity depends on the comings and goings of men who do not meet the full test of this intermediate experience. Even the topography of hell is symbolical. Emphasis belongs on the changing equilibrium, on the men coming and going. Otherwise, it would not be said that “in the eastern quarter there are at present no hells.”²²⁰ Our seer describes the hells with respect to “transfers” in process, always with the suggestive statement that there are as many hells as angelic societies in the heavens.

The solution of the problem of hell is found, therefore, in this scale of values or graded relationship, which shows that the finely tempered organization of the hells is the Divine Order in disguise. This is in conformity with our present conclusions on earth. We anticipate for the man who has indulged in a slight secondary evil associated with his ruling love, a reaction proportionate to his motivated deed. But the man who has deceived and betrayed an innocent girl is by common consent assigned to intense infernal reaction. Supply what is lacking in all types, species, and varieties, and you have graduated reactions for all. This is Divine justice. Envisage hell psychologically and you will not fall into falsities to the effect that people are labeled and imprisoned forever to be “punished” by Divine decree. The Lord casts no one into hell. He punishes no one. But, in His infinite mercy, His tender love and all-encompassing care, with a sympathy that know no limits, and is forever free from time and place, He permits us to see as rapidly as we can endure the disclosures *precisely what* is in us, what has brought us to this pass—with the way opening heaven-ward beyond.

Contrary to Christian tradition, hell did not originate in the misdeeds of any devil “created an angel of light” and then cast down from heaven.²²¹ Hell is from the human race, from self-love in mankind so far as this untempered love has wrought its consequences. We need look no further than to the fact that hell originates in the love of evil and in the consequent falsities.

He enters that state who does not permit himself to be led towards heaven. Although man “of himself” continually tends to the lowest hell, this is true of his lesser nature only. It is not true of that part of his nature through which he is steadily withdrawn from hell by the Lord. He who stoutly refuses to be withdrawn is prepared for a certain infernal sphere according to his affection for evils and falsities. The population of hell consists of those who have turned away and departed from the Lord. The description of hell is highly organized and specific because its basis is not in evil as a separate entity, but in the Divine Providence.

Chapter 41

Freedom and Responsibility

Our study has several times led to the conclusion that this is not primarily a structural psychology, with concepts involving fixities or rigid walls of distinction; it is essentially dynamic, with the emphasis on Divine influx. As important as the doctrine of degrees may be theologically, degrees afford the intellectual rather than the affectional clue. Love is first, love is central. Influx is the practical principle. The symbology is to be used: it would use us if we permitted the hells as structures to interpose static ideas, when we need the quickening dynamic of Divine love. Hell is intelligible only from heaven. Concessions in favor of an apparent limitation of the Divine providence are seen in a different light when the whole field of human activity comes into view. We read that the Lord “is unable to deal in the same way with every man, because evils and their falsities prevent, and not only quench his Divine influx but even reject it.”²²² Evils and their falsities, with the obscurities they engender, do indeed produce “black clouds” that “take away the sunshine.” Yet when the last word has been uttered, we find that the Lord is “unceasingly present with everyone” It is this Presence which is the real dynamic and the true clue. To be carnally minded in this Presence is, in the words of Paul, “death . . . enmity against God,” also “conformed to this world.” But to be spiritually minded, is “life and peace,” renewed by the transforming of the mind from above. Since we have these two minds, we have also the “mind of Christ,” which gives spiritual discernment. Hence, Paul addresses his hearers as men and women in a state of tension till Christ be “formed” in them.

It is this tension which we have next to consider. For the description is incomplete. If the equilibrium in which man is held between two minds “causes” man to think and will, either in the direction of evil and falsity there from, or towards goods and truths, it looks for the moment as if man were not free.²²³ When, further, we read that man is *held* in this equilibrium, evil seems to be a necessity assumed for the sake of contrast and balance, pleasing for those eligible for heaven but unattractive for those needed to sustain this antithesis. For how, one might ask, can every society in heaven have “a society opposite to it in hell, and this for the sake of equilibrium” unless sufficient numbers were regularly consigned to the hells to stabilize the spiritual world as a whole? How can it be true, that people cast themselves into a hell of their “own free choice?” Can this spiritual equilibrium be interpreted to show it to be actual freedom, when the so-called freedom is “given” to man, when it is explicitly “not man’s,” but the Lord’s? And, if man could neither think nor will unless in this equilibrium, is this determinism rather than freedom, so that man is, in the last analysis, absolved from responsibility? To answer these questions we must analyze the doctrine of freedom and then reconsider our inquiry in terms of the age-old question of responsibility.

The psychology of freedom is to be understood as a phase of the psychology of love. All freedom is a property of love, so that freedom and love are one.²²⁴ Freedom belongs to the life of man because love is the “life of man.” Freedom is also connected with enjoyment: acting from love’s enjoyment is acting from freedom. There are numerous kinds of freedom because there are numerous loves, some of which are discordant. Freedom pertains, then, to this whole doctrinal system. Hence, we may begin by noting its general meanings and then consider in what sense freedom is central or decisive.

The term “freedom” is used as an ideal, or value. It is also used with reference to states of relative freedom. In the highest sense, man enters freedom for the first time when regenerate. By contrast, he was enslaved when cupidities and falsities commanded him. Yet, one who is led by these lesser affections deems himself free. Real freedom means leadership of genuine affection for the good and the true.²²⁵ To be led by the Lord through such affection, is truly to be free: the presence of the Lord made manifest through regeneration is freedom indeed. The more the Lord is present, the freer man is. The more man is in the love of goods and truths, the more freely he acts in accordance with this high standard.²²⁶

Again, man is free when ruled by the Lord through conscience. For when so ruled, he acts according to conscience. We have noted that to act contrary to conscience is hell. Even in all compulsion to good there is a certain freedom, although not perceived, as such, while man is under it. So, too, when man compels himself to pursue a certain course against evil and falsity, he is more in freedom. A state of freedom is insinuated into man’s conscience to cause him to conquer evils as from himself. Unless he acquired a proprium given through freedom, no one could ever receive a new will, which in its best estate is conscience. Whatever man does through conscience involves freedom as surely as what he does through love. There is never any real compulsion from the Lord.²²⁷ The lord never compels anyone to think truth or do what is good: love always underlies both the thinking and the doing.²²⁸

A primary reason why no one can be reformed except in freedom is found in man’s relationship to the two worlds, each of which enlists a love, one of which is to be chosen.²²⁹ But to be reformed, man must also *think* what is true as from himself. For, nothing would ever appear to be his own, either through love or through thought, without freedom, as its essential. More specifically, everything pertaining to will appears free, the state of will being freedom.²³⁰

Conduct springing from the heart is the chief characteristic of freedom, as thus regarded. In working toward man's reformation the Lord in His providence bends man's freedom toward the good, so far as He foresees that man will permit himself to be bent.²³¹

Freedom is, therefore, a condition of the operation of Divine life in man. When man has been led to good in freedom, he will accept implanted truths relating to this goodness. Thus, little by little, he will be led into heavenly freedom.²³² The statement that the Lord "rules" man through freedom, withholding him from the apparent freedom of thinking and willing evil, is qualified by the phrase "so far as possible," without depriving him of all freedom whatsoever. To rule is to lead or guide, not to dominate.²³³ That he may be free, the Lord has placed man in equilibrium between evils and goods, falsities and truths. So, we understand why intellect is given man as essential to freedom as a spiritual state respecting choice between contrasted motives. To enter into the affection of the love of self and of the world would be slavery. Man does not realize this truth while in suspense. He does not know that alleged freedom is servitude to self.

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does not realize this truth while in suspense. He does not know that alleged freedom is servitude to self.

Man is able to abstain from evil as of himself because of the continual inflow of Divine life through his will with this endeavor. Thus, is put into man's freedom an activity known as "desisting from evils," and also a tendency to apply himself to what is good. It is "real" freedom to be led by the Lord while serving Him by doing according to His commandments. In obeying the implied freedom is man's perceived as from himself.²³⁶ Man is kept in this freedom which makes obedience possible, not by keeping him aloof from external restraints, but "so far as external bonds do not hinder."²³⁷ Indeed, man is bent toward good, so gently and silently led that both guidance and response seem to be from himself.

Freedom of choice is the operation of man from the Lord which man imputes to himself, freedom of conscience being a condition. Another condition is the ability to think and will from the Lord, implying selection between goods and truths. In the case of truths from the Word, for example, there may be infernal impulses to impede his choice. Freedom in these connections is manifold so that man may join himself reciprocally with the Lord through will and action, thought and speech. Equilibrium between opposite states implies both power to choose and ability to appropriate what is chosen. The connections of this equilibrium are far-reaching indeed. Thus, freedom of choice is explained by its origin in the spiritual world, with reference to the intermediate relationships between heaven and hell.²³⁸ Although ostensibly for the present, our choices are with reference to a ruling love which is to be decisive after death. Permission to choose evil is a condition, also ability to act from one's choice, in contrast with power to respond to goods and truths. Freedom of choice in spiritual matters is basic; while the lesser choices in civil, moral, and natural affairs follow from the more fundamental principle. This freedom is also

basic because its seat is in the higher region of man's mind, will and understanding being the faculties of freedom of choice.²³⁹

The source of this principle of freedom is, in turn, the Lord's unceasing will for men. Spiritual freedom, thus understood, is the basis alike of perception of goods and truths and of natural freedom. Interior freedom is the real test, since only what is interiorly received remains. Externals not in accord with internals are gradually put off, and man when, thus freed, is raised toward heaven. A blessing or curse will follow upon an internal decision. Man is both able to reject the good and open a door toward the good. He was born in precisely this situation where blessings and curses turn upon his choice in spiritual matters. The Lord never closes heaven to any man, but man may close his interiors by rejecting faith and preferring evil. The Lord holds him in the constant possibility of repentance and conversion. It is man's fault if he does not open the door.²⁴⁰

Man's freedom implies rationality, hence, it looks forward to sanity of choice. But it is impossible to put the matter in terms of reason without also including irrationality or possible choices of evil: freedom involves the possibility of doubleness, although doubleness is not a necessity.²⁴¹ The bare fact is that man can be in good and evil at the same time. The Lord permits this, granting man liberty of choice without willing that man should ever choose evil. Indeed, in view of His purposes in the Divine providence the Lord cannot prevent this choice without negating His plan. It is inevitably possible that man may be in heaven with his understanding while through his love in hell. To take away this possibility would be to deny the capacities which elevate him above the brutes.

Man need not permit himself to be allocated to heaven. He is still prepared for “his own place in hell.” Man can close even his capacities. He is as free to think as to will as he chooses, as free to act as if from himself as he would be where he the independent being he takes himself to be. It is this *seeming to be free*, when he most fully takes himself to live and act from his mere self, which constitutes his “internal” freedom. Since acting from “love’s enjoyment” is one aspect of his freedom, this delight is rampant when man is in the plenitude of self-love. But man begins to feel the restraints of his apparent freedom when, freely thinking and willing as he chooses, he finds to his sorrow that he cannot do as he likes amid a social order of things in the world which imposes restraints upon him. Oftentimes cannot even say what he thinks.

These relationships stand out in clearer light when freedom is defined as (1) *natural*, by inheritance, the tendency to love only himself and the world, to think and will evils, to do evils from love of them; and to confirm these evils with their falsities by reasonings; (2) *rational*, from love of reputation with a view to honor or gain, the enjoyment of appearing externally as a moral man (sincere, just, chaste, friendly): in such a state man is deterred from evils because he loves reputation; such freedom is merely external if natural, and only rational in the truer sense if spiritual; and (3) *spiritual*, from love of eternal life, evils now being regarded as sins, and no longer willed; man as now looking to the Lord enjoys interior or higher freedom (from internal love); he acts from freedom itself in accordance with reason; this freedom increases as natural freedom decreases, conjoining itself more and more with rational freedom and thinking, willing, speaking, doing what is good and true, and purifying natural freedom.²⁴² Willingness to think that there is eternal life is a condition. From rationality comes the ability to understand, from liberty comes the ability to will what is thus disclosed. Free will is thus, in essence, doing what is good from the will.²⁴³

Possessing apparent freedom when led by delights and pleasures from cupidities, man has evidence in his own experience of that which forms the contrast to real freedom when he is led by the Lord. But apparent freedom also has the other meaning already indicated: power to impel to action which goes so far that man seems to be acting from reason. Indeed, man is permitted to go so far as his self-persuasions that, when he comes to his senses, he will have full opportunity to hold his evils in aversion, that these evils may be removed. So, too, man appropriates what he loves, and must therefore be permitted to love and choose.

More intelligible than any appearance, however, is the teaching that in choosing and acting as if from himself man is responding to life as reactive, not as an independent agent. It is well then to repeat that, when moving toward goods and truths, he is being led by Divine love, his conscience being from the Lord. Suffering himself to be bent in freedom when he does not know this fact, he is gradually being led from slavery to conjunction with the Lord as the only real freedom. Even the appearance that he is free and therefore his “own” is already, in an ideal sense of the term, due to this conjunction.²⁴⁴ The Divine love, willing its own to be another’s, underlies even appearances to the contrary. Very many things must veritably appear to be appropriated so as to become one with man’s “life’s love,” identified with him in spirit. Yet, what is most interiorly appropriated, is the Lord’s life in him. In his greatest apparent victories, it is the Lord mastering temptation, the Lord who exchanges one kind of freedom for another.

Man’s relative freedom is, in brief, for a purpose amid a long series of changes from lower to higher planes. Man must then overcome the illusion that he is free in all the lesser meanings of the word. When finally he is free enough to regard his past with spiritual insight, he learns that the truth he thinks is from the Lord, the good from the same source, the guidance Divine Wisdom, the plan Divine Providence, the efficiency Divine Life, “operating,” “bending,”

“withholding” him. All his apparent freedom must be put off and real freedom put on, when he is regenerated. Real freedom is rational: freedom to do right. Hence, it is universal. Man’s ability to acquire a proprium, which he is pleased to call his own, is simply his *relative* capacity to enter into misconceptions regarding himself, mistaking falsity for truth and evil for good, howbeit these are absolute misconceptions. Even the ruling love—if man confirms himself in a prevailing love which makes for hell, which cannot be eradicated—is a part of the total plan of experience into which the individual awakens ignorant, unashamed, totally unaware at first that he possesses the potentiality of the Divine image and likeness.

Yet man, if in any sense a real individual, is thus far, actually free. In any event there is a prevailing antithesis in all our experiences, and from moment to moment we face alternatives. Freedom seems then to resolve itself into an ideal to be striven for, beginning with freedom of choice as admittedly a fact which we can neither escape nor deny, however skillful we may be in raising objections, standing off and pretending that all our actions are determined and all responsibility an illusion. We must follow some of these misconceptions still further.

Moral Responsibility

It is usually assumed that responsibility is moral, as the term is used in ethical philosophy. If man’s moral conduct is attributed to his will, this to his character, and his character to heredity and environment, every deed is said to follow from his character as thus conditioned. When he acts, it is from an assignable motive which might be predicted by an onlooker who sees all his tendencies to action, observes his mind while he deliberates, then sees him act from the strongest motive, the one which triumphs in the apparent inner contest precisely because it is the stronger. His conduct is, then, said to be causally determined. Thus, the good

man does the good deed which expresses his nature. The denizen of the slums whose heredity is as unfortunate as his environment also expresses his nature. A man's nature is part of the system of the universe, conceived to be causally determined as a whole. Apparently there is never the slightest exception. A free act, one that arises from free will (acting without a naturally determined motive) would be an exception.

The argument for determinism, as thus defined, has been greatly strengthened in our day. Behind the argument on moral grounds is the mechanical theory of the universe, admitting no exception to the reign of law. Psychology affords no solace, so far as it succumbs to this conception of necessary sequences permitting no appeal. It is easy to infer that, as life holds no alternatives, freedom is a myth, moral responsibility a delusion.

Yet, strange to say, even determinists adhere to moral responsibility. One never hears them advising people to do as they like on the assumption that they will escape retribution. No one who thinks, who faces life to "see it whole" ever expects to evade the consequences. Hence, the proposition to "abolish hell" is received with derision. The folly of life consists in trying the impossible. On practical and legal grounds, we find people stoutly holding to the conviction that the human soul is imputable, responsible for moral deeds, despite the fact that, after a deed has been done, we can reason back to the assumed motive for it, for instance a robbery or murder, and infer that the strongest motive prevailed. Religious people everywhere assume that men not only ought to make great ventures of faith, but are so far free, that they can do so, have done so, and this in real freedom. Our moral capacities and opportunities imply powers of choice, with a conviction that selection between alternatives is imperative. Man finds himself in a moral situation. He is in a real predicament. He will choose to free himself from the inner tension. For the suspense would be intolerable. Moreover, he is aware of an "ought," with its august

commands. Duty has a claim on him which he cannot escape. It commands his inner mind when he tries to be evasive or to procrastinate. He is aware of shame, regret, and remorse, if he disobeys. He finds that conscience approves when he does right. To possess conscience is to recognize moral responsibility.

We have made this brief summary of the situation as a devotee of ethics would regard it in our day, to show the force of our doctrine in pushing the issues further back, from moral to spiritual responsibility. Our doctrine shows us that determinism is true on the plane where natural sequences are necessary effects: on the plane where heredity and memory-knowledges supply the subject-matter of all moral and civil deeds. But the doctrines also plainly show that there is no solution of the problem before us until we trace all causality to spiritual sources. Man is not a free “moral” agent. He is a spirit in states of tension between two loves implying two worlds, with the assurance that his affections will be reinforced whenever he grants opportunity. The alternatives he faces are not limited to the natural world. He is constituted for choices which will decide his reigning love as the ruling factor of his existence after death.

Greater privileges mean more power to adopt them. Man is spiritually environed by the Divine influx which makes possible both his freedom and his responsibility. He is essentially a social being, a possible candidate for a permanent function in the Grand Man. To understand in what sense he is responsible we should therefore note what he is in the totality of his selfhood in the Divine image and likeness.

Let us consider what would follow on the assumption that, in exercising freedom of choice, man’s conduct is solely a resultant of necessary consequences, mind and brain being products of a mechanical world, as the brain is described by present-day physiology, and as the

mind is accounted for by biological psychology (mind as determined by vital processes, laws, conditions).

The Word would then be valueless as a means to spiritual life.²⁴⁵ For spiritual truths to be effective, they must be carried into deeds done in their behalf so that these truths shall abide with man. This act of acceptance and appropriation, leading to effective conduct, is a function of will, participating in freedom. Without this free response, man could not conjoin himself with the Lord. He would possess neither charity nor faith. Nor could he do his part toward reformation and regeneration.

The permission of evils under Providence would be unintelligible. There would be no ground for the state of equilibrium between two worlds, no reason for it, and no explanation of the fact that we actually find ourselves struggling amidst this tension.

There would be no basis for what we popularly take to be our freedom in natural, civic, and moral affairs, wherein our fellowmen and their laws hold us accountable. The situation is admittedly hopeless when we try to think the matter out by appeal to heredity and environment. Man is terribly handicapped, weighted down by a tendency to attribute every right to himself, with a certain perverse self-love reinforced by an equally compelling self-intelligence. He is impeded by two heredities, one of which is permanent (the paternal) in this world and the next. He is subject to an influx from the world, to his detriment, insofar as his life is out of accord with the Divine order. He is far more insidiously subject to adverse influences from the unseen world. His memory-knowledges tend to shape not only all his beliefs but all his modes of conduct in the natural world. So strong is habit that his understanding readily confirms his self-love. No native endowment on the natural plane is a protection. He is even devoid of innate ideas, which might

perchance determine his conduct toward what is right. His sole hope, so far as his understanding is concerned, lies in a quickening of the will from higher sources than any natural incentive or influence, and this quickening could come through free acceptance only. If deprived of this freedom, man would be wholly subject to natural conditions and processes, utterly unable to advance from what is natural to what is spiritual. The presumption that we are spiritually free and in high degree responsible is strong indeed, in view of the fact that we are aware of no feeling of compulsion when making up our minds.

More conclusively still, unless man were spiritually free—so that wrong choices were attributable to him, as responsible for sin and evil in the world—the monstrous inference would follow that God is the cause of evil.²⁴⁶ Predestination would then be true, and some of us would be victims of election between the good and the damned, condemned to hell without the opportunity to object. But the Lord, who is good and merciful, just, all-loving, could never be the creator of evil; nor would He ever insinuate influences calculated to intensify existing inclinations to evil.²⁴⁷ On the contrary, His goodness, omnipresent with man, is ever importuning and urging him to desist from evil and cleave to the good. Man is subject to evil through a delight which he confuses with delights favorable to heaven. The Lord is with man to guard him where opportunities for good are needed, and to offset evils due to heredity whenever these are disclosed as what they really are, for man's judgment and choice. Without freedom to choose, man would become a victim of these adverse native tendencies. The proposition that evil was introduced by man fits the facts as we find them.

Man is not consigned to hell because of hereditary inclinations. He is responsible if he gives assent to such propensities, if he adopts and acts upon them. Responsibility for inherited tendencies to particular evils or modes of sin is fully attributable to adults only. When these

proclivities attain full power, because thrown to the surface for man to see what they are, there is also opportunity to meet them to the full, to fight against them with success, by earnestly seeking Divine help in overcoming them. To see that an inclination toward self-love is an actual menace, should be to will to have this love mastered by love toward God and man. Meanwhile, the evil inclinations are held in check insofar as the spiritual mind becomes dominant. The existence of this mind would be an absurdity if man were not free.

We return, then, to the proposition that, as a spiritual being in the natural world, endowed with this freedom, it was man's privilege to choose. In choosing, he exercised responsibility, and so he made the great venture without which man would not be truly man. Unless man were responsible in precisely this way, there would be no explanation of the fact that, essentially an "organ" receptive of life from the Lord, man reacts "as if" using power that is his own; when in reality he has neither power nor life, neither love nor wisdom, as his own. Man is so constituted that, by making the supreme acknowledgement of dependence on the Lord, he is able more and more fully to use Divine energies as his own. This response would be wholly unmeaning if he were not free, for goodness would not be good if it were forced on him. Man could never enjoy the benefits of acknowledgment were he not responsible for making it. Responsibility is profoundly significant because existence is replete with alternatives or ambiguities, any of which would readily run into the hell of self-love. We are well aware, when we have made the right choice that we might have sunk in the scale. We realize this afterwards as never before. No one realizes his responsibility like the one who, admitting his weaknesses, sees what he might have come to, and how momentous was his appeal for Divine succor in the hour of trial.

We realize, then, that we deserve no credit. We wish no praise for virtue. For we know, at last, how strong was the impulse in the downward direction, how narrow the margin of escape.

But the fact that praise and blame are readily bestowed in the world as we find it, bears testimony to the widespread conviction that man is free. We impute blame on the assumption that there is right and wrong. We believe that the wrongdoer might have acted otherwise. We know ourselves well enough to realize that we might have dropped down under similar circumstances. The conviction is inescapable that the man in whom good is predominant, will go to heaven, and that the one who sows the seeds of the whirlwind, will reap as he sows. What meaning would this imputation of evil hold for us if man were not free?

The Lord raises all men to heaven “so far as man allows.” This response involves belief in the Lord and a life according to Divine precepts. Those who are unwilling to believe, withdraw themselves and suffer results in keeping. Each step in behalf implies an act of will, each acceptance of a Divine precept involves deeds to be done, then, a line of conduct reaching through the years. When these lines of conduct lead to a permanent function in the Grand Man, something real has been achieved in the fulfillment of the Divine purpose in man’s creation. So, too, each decision in favor of the right kills evil possibilities. Unless we hold that the decisions were free, this whole description of life’s situation would lose its significance.

Can free acts be articulated with the spiritual system of the universe? Yes, these acts befit the Divine purpose in so providing for man that each shall, by choosing, find occupation in the Grand Man.

Is the conduct of one who possesses spiritual freedom predictable? No. Power to predict is sought by believers in determinism, on the ground that all motives can be traced to heredity and environment. A prediction would be exceedingly dubious. The Lord, alone, knows what we might do. He has prepared for every contingency. By giving us freedom He refrains from

predicting what we will do. Judgment is His, not ours. It is difficult enough for us to attribute motives after we have chosen and acted.

If all contingencies are divinely foreseen and provided for, can it be said that our choices make a difference? Assuredly, for at each stage of the process we reject possibilities, accept others, and so we move forward to consequences which might have been otherwise. There is deliberation with momentary temptation, choice which annuls other choices equally possible, decision with its fiat of will, then the ensuing conduct, which may be momentous. The situation, gone, can never be recalled. The chooser forthwith realizes how direful would have been the consequences had he cast his vote the other way, had he taken a bribe, or indulged in deceit. Once in motion, he may see excellent reasons in the Divine economy for his choice. What follows is very little his, for the mind's operations spontaneously carry out the decisions.

Thus, we return to the conclusion that spiritual freedom is the rational expression of man's better nature. Seen from one viewpoint, this may appear to be self-determination. For many significant elements enter in: wise deliberation, uplifting sentiments, a moral purpose, religious aspiration, hope, and satisfaction in the right decision. Seen from within, man believes himself free and responsible and unaware of compulsion in any of these ideal matters. But viewed from the standpoint of spiritual perception, the great choice is seen to be cooperative: the Lord gives man liberty enough so the choice is truly his; yet aids, sustains, and carries his endeavors forward wherever help is needed. The determining movement of will is most truly man's and with will and love: "Such as the love is, such is the man." Will quickened by love impels understanding to discover means for realizing the decision. Seen from above, man's decisive deed is a perfect exemplification of the truth that man, as spirit, is an organ of response through Love and Wisdom.

This may seem a narrow margin of freedom. But it harmonizes with the analysis of the preceding discussions in this series. What a man “thinks” is not imputed to him. Hence, a considerable portion of his mental life is thrown out of account. It is solely by exercising volitional choice that man becomes responsible. Direful, indeed, would be his situation if the evils to which he is inclined by birth should become a part of him when he experiences their inflow into his thought. Man is saved from an inundation of evils by offsetting goods inflowing from the Lord. It is, then, that the will has its momentous opportunity to decide. To adopt the evils would indeed be to enlist the understanding. For our understanding is in a way neutral. But to choose the good suffices to show where we stand. Our vote once given, the results become effective almost instantaneously. The more acute our awareness of this situation, the more convinced that we are spiritually responsible, and if spiritually accountable, we are morally responsible too. If determinism were true, we would have an enormous problem on our hands: the demand for an explanation of this intricate organization of ours, marvelously adapted for spiritual freedom.

Chapter 42

The Sphere of Faith

It has become apparent as our inquiry has progressed that the psychology of lesser mental processes is based on principles discernible only on a higher plane. Hence, the natural depends on the spiritual, and knowledge of the spiritual on Divine truth. Mental processes belong less and less on the level of ordinary analysis. Reason, based on inferences from facts to conclusions, is decreasingly implied; but reason in terms of systematic truths, enters into the account more and more. Consequently, reasons for the statements made are progressively in evidence. Therefore, a great deal depends on faith in the universal principles on which all these reasons are founded: the doctrinal system is brought into clearer light. Hence, the psychology takes its cue from matters which lie beyond the sphere of mental verification. Yet, we are impelled toward the limits, since all previous stages in the inquiry depend on the perceptions disclosed from above.

Although emphasis falls frequently on the affections and the will, and when intellectual matters are under consideration, doctrine is always requisite. The elements of mental life are not described from a merely empirical viewpoint, not even the standpoint of two-world experience. The observation and analysis of such an experience as our seer enjoyed would not be possible save through the doctrinal disclosures. Hence, all secondary matters are to be studied as doctrines from that which is primary or central, the doctrine of the Lord being the final test. The psychology is rationalistic because of doctrine.

It would be beyond the province of our inquiry to consider doctrine in all its bearings, in order to clarify this, the central principle of inner consistency. For this would involve a study of the cardinal doctrine as the highest universal in the descending scale, each stage of the descent being dependent on the doctrine of the Lord. The Lord is the Word, all doctrine in the Word is from the Lord, the Lord is doctrine, all doctrine is about Him, and there exists no other doctrine which is "Divine doctrine itself." The utmost we can undertake is to show how the Word becomes humanized through spiritual descent and mental processes from highest to lowest. By implication, it follows that the central doctrine is to be taken in a certain practical way, and this way of life is the essence of religion, as we shall see more clearly in another chapter.

Again, doctrine is essential to all spiritual life with reference to reformation and regeneration interpreted as activities involving eternal principles. Doctrine, in this sense of the term, holds a central position which is discernible in its own right, irrespective of what the individual may think, apart from all creeds as sectarian. Our inquiry in this respect is limited by the psychological place which doctrine occupies in the scale of knowledges pertaining to will, understanding, and conduct, when it becomes a question of the attitudes acquired by believers, some of whom are more progressive than others. By contrast, with this enlightenment from heavenly doctrine, people have proceeded in the ecclesiastical world as if the attitude of the officials in authority were decisive, as if mere humanism were the highest truth.

What is doctrinal depends on what is intellectual, that is, the understanding, reason, the first rational. As doctrine is understood, so it is believed; and the understanding of what is doctrinal gives faith its quality. For the moment it often looks as though understanding occupied the central position in disclosing the doctrines which we possess today, as if what passes as doctrine were individual belief reinforced by ecclesiastical authority. To say this, however,

would be to forget both the Divine origin of doctrine and the fact that, even on the human side, love rather than understanding occupies the central position. “Nothing doctrinal can enter man except by means of the affections. For, there is life in affection, but not in truths of doctrine and of knowledge about them.”²⁴⁸ Doctrinal matters are, in highest degree, essential because they are necessary for the formation of the life of charity. Doctrine, then, is not to be taken in an exclusively intellectual sense, as one might regard it when listening to a doctrinal sermon. There is a “good of doctrine” (including love and charity), and a “truth of doctrine.” The good is first in rank, and both are for conduct. Doctrinals separated from love and charity as promptings to actual life never constitute an internal church. The doctrines alone might be sheer matters of memory. Even the worst persons may possess such knowledge. Indeed, knowledge of the literal doctrines of the Bible is common enough. The vital point is that the Word is said to be “shut up,” when understood literally, including every statement in it accepted as doctrinal.²⁴⁹ It is, still, more closed when assumed doctrines favor the cupidities of loves of self and the world. But when there is charity (which is of the life) there is indeed an internal church, and much depends on what the “life” is understood to be.

We also note the meaning of psychological differences when we compare what is rational with what is doctrinal. Our study of the lower and higher rationals has already made us cautious. We are prepared for the emphatic statement that “there is no doctrine of faith from the rational.”²⁵⁰ The rational is in the appearances of good and truth. It involves fallacies due to sensuous matters confirmed by external knowledge. In general, it is merely human. Nothing doctrinal can be begun from or built upon it. Doctrine must be from the Divine. Hence, the ground for the unqualified teaching that the Lord *is* doctrine, is the Word; with the explanation that it is from the conjunction of Divine goodness and truth, and is intelligible when seen in this

twofold relationship. No less emphatic is the declaration that insofar as there is in doctrine anything whatever that is human (sensuous, “scientific,” rational) from which it is believed, it is not doctrine.²⁵¹ To remove what is human, such as the first rational, and to believe without it, is to be prepared to understand doctrine as life-giving. It is Divine influx which gives life to doctrine. It is the factors proper to the human mind as such which interfere.

Although faith is a religious rather than a psychological consideration, one’s active faith is infilled with one’s doctrine; and an affirmative attitude toward the tenets of faith as a vital system of doctrine has much to do with faith in actual practice. The intellectual element of faith is, indeed, of very great moment. Faith is defined with particular reference to the knowledge of all matters embraced in the doctrine.²⁵² Acknowledgment of these tenets is essential. Obedience to what the doctrine teaches is imperative, for example, love toward the Lord and the neighbor in actual present daily living. The true doctrine of faith is one of mutual love. This includes understanding of the interior teachings of the Word.

Faith used to be a doctrine of salvation by appeal to the sacrificial atonement. Little was expected of the believer. Or, it implied assent to such a doctrine as the trinity, believed but not understood. It was also belief concerning matters on which we were supposed to have no real knowledge, especially faith in the future life in the absence of definite teaching concerning the spiritual world. By contrast, doubt was sin. “Faith alone” passed currently as Christianity among Protestants.

With emphasis on psychological matters, faith becomes an affair of one’s whole life. Faith calls for an acknowledgment which enlists will, love, and vitalizing conduct due to love. As acknowledgment of what is essential to the system of Divine doctrine, faith is much more an

assent or belief. It calls for downright affection for truth, from an allegiance of heart and will, which declares the doctrine to be true through insight and zeal growing into deep conviction. This insight helps us to see that faith is love of truth from Divine goodness as its source. It is not, then, essentially intellectual in origin. It is faith in the Lord as the only real Savior, with the conviction that He alone saves. It is not our belief. It is not our will. It is not even our conduct according to what we believe. So, it is important to reiterate the statement that a belief might be essentially a matter of memory.²⁵³ Faith through will might be too assertive. Faith based on conduct would be inadequate. Yet, these elements are needed in the faith that genuinely aids the spiritual life.

Faith is first in the order of time, as an adaptation of truth, in contrast with the coming of charity. But, the good is first in *end*, and that which is first in “end,” is actually first because it is of primary value. The element of will or love is, therefore, actually primary.²⁵⁴

Faith which comes first in the order of time may be merely natural faith, as in a thick mist. In essence, faith is *seeing spiritually* that God is.²⁵⁵ Merely natural faith is only persuasion of knowledge. It accompanies a mode of life that is natural, rather than spiritual, with a vision of God as far off. When vested in externalities it is only an emulation of true faith. So, it is likely to be transitory, without a real object. Spiritual faith beholds in vision what is due to God, what goes forth from Him. The contrast is between those who are in both faith and a life of charity, and those who have merely known about faith and charity. True faith must have an object, must be determinate, implying right belief. Then it is permanent; it is, indeed, spiritual sight, which is a state to be compared with normal eyesight through bodily organs, in contrast with every perverted eyesight. Granted this sight of the understanding, the internal man’s will having been set right, the external acts will harmonize with the internal attitude. Such faith is founded on a

rock. The elements of saving faith, therefore, are: spiritual sight, harmony of truths adopted, conviction that these are genuine truths, and acknowledgment of the good inscribed on the mind as an enduring state.

Faith may seem, for the moment, to be merely a “complex of truths shining in the mind.” But life according to these truths is essential to faith in its plenitude. When the truths have become matters of will, harmonious conduct will be the result. Faith is, then, identified with right belief in the sense that all other faith is false. It is imperative to distinguish between the true and the spurious, the latter being meretricious, adulterous, closed or blind, erratic, visionary, or distorted.²⁵⁶ True faith is distinctive belief in the Lord as Savior, as contrasted with any notion that He is “mere man.”²⁵⁷ All other faith is spurious. Or, if hypocritical, it is not faith at all. So, it amounts to the elevation of self to the first rank, with thoughts and affections directed toward the body in which the self is immersed. Alleged faith is, in fact, self-absorption. Again, where evil prevails there is no faith. Faith is heaven. As right belief, it can be acquired from truths in the Word. Thus far, it is contributory toward the union of the three elements already mentioned: right belief, response of will or heart, and a life according to these. Saving faith is such as the union of these three makes possible. To separate either element as if adequate by itself would be to reduce it to sterility.

The form of faith is natural. But, as natural, it may be little more than what man “ought” to believe because it is said to be right from this or that formal point of view. By contrast with any items of faith derived from without, saving faith enters into many by a prior way, from the soul into the higher regions of the understanding; whereas, the natural knowledges which it assimilates are posterior, hence, inferior.²⁵⁸ In modern terms these are mere “data” to be interpreted in their true context.

Faith passes through infantile, adolescent, and adult stages of development. Each of these has its psychology, as we have already seen. Into mature faith, there enter such constituents as confidence in the Lord as Savior, trust that he who lives well and believes aright will be saved, with other essentials making a rounded whole. Hence, there is insight into the falsities mixed with truths which mislead all who lack this maturity of spiritual vision, also understanding of the perverted states which follow, in each case, according to the type of perverted doctrine.²⁵⁹ He who grasps the situation, discerning the truths and penetrating the falsities, will know precisely how true faith is formed: by going to the Lord, by learning truths from the Word, and by living according to these truths.²⁶⁰ He will then see why the life of charity (life according to doctrine) is the test;²⁶¹ and why doctrinal matters are essential to the formation of the life of charity,²⁶² also why the doctrine of charity involves all matters of faith.²⁶³

The human elements which make the doctrine null and void are those of memory-knowledge and the “rational.”²⁶⁴ With the removal of matters of sense, memory-knowledges and the content of the “rational”—doctrine being believed without these matters—doctrine then “lives.” Faith through doctrine is especially necessary concerning what is purely spiritual and celestial, that is, Divine; since it infinitely transcends man’s apprehension. Again, it is needed because the spiritual principle in man is born from the affection of the knowledges of truth from doctrine.²⁶⁵ With faith, there is also needed that knowledge which discloses falsities due to (1) falsities of doctrine, and (2) falsities of evil.²⁶⁶ The great objective here as elsewhere is conjunction with the Lord in the twofold sense always before us in this system: by means of truths belonging to the understanding, and goods belonging to the will. This union is reciprocal in the profoundest sense. For, the Lord’s conjunction with man is a conjunction within the natural, and man’s conjunction with the Lord is a natural conjunction from the spiritual.²⁶⁷ It is

reciprocal, not as we think of action and reaction, but in the sense of mutuality by cooperation; for it is the Lord only who acts, while man receives action and responds as if from himself. It is man's highest privilege to respond to that incoming Life with the fullness of cooperation which constitutes an energizing faith. To have such faith, is to possess a rational-spiritual mind, to see the "truths of faith" in spiritual light, to know why charity is essential, and to love the opportunities for service which follow.

Obedience is a significant term in all these connections, because it involves a contrast between higher and lower states. Faith is chiefly obedience to whatever the Lord teaches, and man should compel himself to obey the Lord's commands: the external ought to obey the internal. Yet obedience which involves giving assent to what has been commanded is partly intellectual, and it applies to man before regeneration. The resulting good is indirect. But, after regeneration, man acts from love of truth, and does good from affection for truth; this love-motive is higher than obedience as a motive. Before this great change, man does good because the truth dictates that it should be done. Obedience is psychologically distinguished by the fact that it is due to an intellectual motive. Obedience as an act is from will. But this act means "doing truth from command," not yet from freedom, not from the good that implies charity. To suffer oneself to be reformed, is to act from obedience, not from affection; hence, not from the heart. If there is ever an appearance of freedom in obedience, this is due to a motive of self-glory. Yet, there is a sense in which, to serve the Lord by obeying His precepts, is to be free.

The life of faith, in general, is obedience to precepts in contrast with the life of charity, which is to live the precepts from love.²⁶⁸ When we obey it may be because of an anticipated reward. Such obedience may not lift us above the natural plane. So, too, when we listen or give heed we may be obeying with the understanding only. But, when we actually do what is bidden,

the will comes into prominence. To do good for the sake of doing good is to advance much further. One may do what is good from obedience before one has fought against evils. But the higher states come with victory over evils. Still further, one might do good to the neighbor from obedience to precepts which show that this ought to be done, and yet not love the neighbor. The higher motive is to do good because one really loves the neighbor. A man will not, then, take the lead through benevolent acts because merit is placed in those acts, He will do good from the heart, in the heat of love rather than in the light.

We have noted the fact that this psychology calls for keen awareness of one's motives, notably those which are intimately allied with love in its typical forms. We are prepared for the explicit teaching that every man ought to examine himself. Otherwise, he will not know what evil is, but will be in danger of loving it on account of its delights. Self-examination is also essential to purification, and to the repentance which precedes reformation.²⁶⁹ This especially means the examination of one's thoughts and the intentions of one's will. When a man has examined himself and acknowledged whatever is active in him, he is ready to acknowledge whatever is evil as a sin against the Lord. Unless a man thus admits what is evil, he is, in the freedom of it, likely to be insidiously influenced. We now see why it was necessary to discuss the sphere of consciousness, and discriminate between the so-called unconscious and the present doctrine. To discover that one has a "complex," would be very different from comparing oneself with Divine doctrine to see what one's actual motivation is. True self-examination differs from ordinary introspection, for it is a question of value-judgments. To pass such judgments, one must have a scale which spares no one. What is called for is self-exploration in the light of the doctrine of the human spirit, with its inmost, the Divine influx, and the Word as the final standard.

It is imperative that both the internal motives and the external activities be examined: both the intentions and their consequences. To examine external activities alone would be to see what has actually been done, but not what led to it. Thus, one might explore the evils of one's body, and neglect those of the spirit. Exploration of the evils that are within a man is particularly essential to reformation. This means giving heed to intentions much more than to thoughts. Thoroughly to examine the internal man is, in reality, to explore the external also.

To admit one's intentions, is to penetrate appearances created when one is actuated by fear of the law and the disgrace which wrong-doing might entail. Then, too, a man might hold that some evils are allowable, if he did not penetrate his motives to the core. Man is equipped for this analysis, that he may discern intentions in contrast with will. Merely to say that one is a sinner with regard to particular evils would signify nothing. As evil clings to man especially through its delights, it is necessary to see through these enticements and to see their power. We may also know where to put the emphasis in self-examination from the fact that, after death, every man is examined as to the quality of his life here.

A man need not, of course, examine all his shortcomings at once. To examine some sin in particular, seeing it for what it is, is to begin to repent. To know what sin is, in general, and yet not to examine oneself to see if it be present, is not to make any actual advance. For mere knowledge is not far reaching. Sin pertains to the intentions of one's will rather than to the thoughts, although searching examination of one's thoughts is also analysis of one's intentions. Granted self-examination, supplication and confession follow.

It might be said that self-examination is impossible because man is mere sin. Again, dread and terror might seize us even at the thought. But, to yield to these negative impulses,

would be to ignore the truth of man's larger selfhood and its resources. Every man can know the quality of the life he possesses from the end he is pursuing. So, too, one may know the quality of his trust by his affections and objectives. Self-exploration accompanies not only reformation, but the receiving of remains. It also accompanies the balancing of good and evil, lest an element of falsity be conjoined with good, or the least evil be united with truth. A man may well concentrate therefore, upon the opportunities for self-examination which his nature affords, remembering that the ends of his affections are known to the Lord alone, while his objectives in other respects are due to intentions which he has power to explore. Then, too, doctrines afford a test.

Since faith is essential, there is every reason for reviewing our ideas of prayer, that we may eliminate the old-time idea that prayer is petition addressed to God on the vague assumption that, with Him, "all things are possible." We need also to eliminate the modern skeptical view that prayer is auto-suggestion. It is a question of becoming wisely affirmative in our realizations—where we were once torn asunder by doubts—through discovery of the efficiency in our inner life: the Divine influx. We have seen that this influx is constant. It bespeaks Love and Wisdom. It implies Divine providence. Were we in perfect accord with this influx, with no interferences due to influx from the world, or any adverse influx from the spiritual world, life would be complete for us. What we need is knowledge of the interferences. The psychology has yielded this knowledge step by step. What we need is to *realize* the truth of the Divine influx, and go live by this truth. In, thus, endeavoring to realize what Providence has in store for us, we need "perfect prayer," and we already possess this in the Lord's Prayer, as Rev. Chauncey Giles

has so clearly shown. In addition we need any imagery which will help to make this realization vivid.[§]

“Prayer, regarded in itself, is talking with God; and some internal view thence of the matters of prayer, to which there answers something like an influx into the perception or thought of the mind; but this with a difference according to the man’s state, and according to the essence of the subject of the prayer.”²⁷⁰ If the prayer is from love and faith, and if it is only with reference to celestial and spiritual matters that man prays, there comes forth in the prayer something like revelation. This heavenly element is then manifested in the affection of the one who is praying: with regard to hope, comfort, or a certain internal joy. Hence, in the internal sense, prayer signifies what is revealed. When the motive is less pure, the resulting experience varies accordingly. Man first wants, longs for, and prays; the Lord then answers, informs, and does. Other than this, man does not receive anything Divine.²⁷¹

Unless we are aware of a need, and feel a certain yearning for that which will meet the need, we do not really pray. Our conversational up-reaching puts us into an attitude to apprehend the answer. Thus, our seer says of his own experience: “I prayed to the Lord, and suddenly the interiors of my mind were opened.”²⁷² It is essential to approach the Lord through His Human.²⁷³ Hence, the very great value of “our Father,” as the beginning. To pray without ceasing, is to prepare oneself all the while for the incoming of the heavenly life. To “ask” and to “pray” is to realize the life of love and charity. To pray in the universal sense, is to imply all the truth which man thinks and speaks. Hence, those who do good and speak the truth act and pray from the love of affection, thus from the Lord.²⁷⁴

[§] The Rev. Chauncey Giles (1813-1893) was a leader of the New Jerusalem Church and, from 1877 until his death, served as president of the General Conference of the Church of the New Jerusalem in the United States. Editor of the *New Jerusalem Messenger*, his books include *The Resurrection of Man* (1873), *Our Children in the Other Life* (1874), and *The New Jerusalem: A New Church in Outward Form as Well as in Inward Doctrine* (1874).

To prepare ourselves to pray effectively we need, therefore, to remind ourselves what the inmost is, that Love and Wisdom enter the sanctuary of the spirit unawares. Although we cannot consciously enter the inner chamber to put it in order, as if we were to know from actual feeling how the human meets the Divine, we can purify our spirit, that the inner sanctuary may be a more fitting receptacle. Much will depend on our anticipation or readiness, our endeavor to respond. Since very much depends upon the quality of love wherewith we thus prepare to receive, we have special reason for being single-minded. The preceding inquiry has shown what is most significant in fostering this single-mindedness.

Chapter 43

Temptation and Regeneration

Temptation is often thought of as a purely personal experience, as if one phase of a man's nature sets itself against another within the restricted area of his own selfhood. With such a view in mind, a man naturally condemns the objectionable part of his nature as "lower," by putting the more desirable traits over against it as "higher." It, then, seems possible by means of self-mastery to overcome all temptation. This appears to be a reasonable view since, by limiting the contest to one's own selfhood, one refrains from censuring others. Moreover, belief in self seems to make certain the triumph of one's higher nature. The general idea of temptation is that moral struggles are likely to come at any time, not by law, but at random; since the unruly element in one's members may become rampant on the slightest occasion.

This random view is dispelled by the teaching that temptation comes by law: temptation is the means by which evils and falsities are broken up. This disruption does not occur until an assault can safely be made upon the love by which a man is impelled.²⁷⁵ Temptation is always an attack upon the love, with special reference to man's freedom. It is not limited to the lower and higher selfhood in the popular sense of the word, as if man were independent. Nor, is self-mastery the clue.

For no man is tempted until able to reflect on his experiences and freely perceive in his own way what is true and good.²⁷⁶ A man must first have been brought to a position where he is

in a measure prepared in goods and truths, so that there is at least a doubt, if not anxiety, concerning the triumph of the good and the true. If one were sure of victory, as if independent and capable through self-mastery of overcoming even the subtlest influence without praying for help, one would not be tempted. When actually tempted, one is inclined to respond to the enticements which besiege him, in a state of hesitancy, wavering between negatives and affirmatives. Again, as no one can be tempted unless evil adheres to him, temptation comes especially when a man is undergoing regeneration.

For, temptation is a “vastation” or casting out of those phases of a man’s nature which are distinctively his proprium. These unregenerate elements must be brought to the surface, seen and clearly recognized for what they are. Man is not aware of what is hostile in him (as distinctly hostile) until he has partly given himself to what is good. Once stirred to the depths by a spiritual experience, temptation touches and assaults him, as if to change if not destroy his very nature. Thus, the evil deeds he has wrought are brought into play. There is a stinging and tormenting of conscience, the plane of temptation. The falsities attendant upon his evils, are also excited. Hence, the combat is partly intellectual, although the grievous part is a struggle of will. Temptations do not arise until man reaches maturity, when the contest is admittedly a struggle with conscience in which the motives seeking mastery over him are seen.

The process of temptation cannot be adequately put in psychological terms. For regeneration is due to Divine activity within man: it is the Lord alone who fights for the good and true. Thus, the combat is in a measure lifted above the level where man has control. The purpose of temptation being to bring man into conjunction with the Lord, the combat begins when, in the Divine providence, it is wise to intensify the usual antithesis between self-love and love toward the Lord and the neighbor. Spiritual temptations are possible to those who are in

charity towards the neighbor, celestial temptations to those only who love the Lord.²⁷⁷ With the activity of a higher degree of love than that which has been active, a more intense temptation becomes possible, also a more penetrating process of purification. The process of temptation is, therefore, very far removed from the isolated struggles within oneself popularly called temptation. For, admittedly, when man reaches the point where he is touched by love toward the neighbor, or toward the Lord and the neighbor, he is very intimately related with social groups; his temptation involves a very widespread contest between affections.

What is commonly called temptation, for instance, when a man is approached by a commercial schemer, a corrupt politician, or one who fosters social vices, is one more incident in the habitual contrast between self-love or love of the world and its opposite. This antithesis exists all the way along. Man is subject to it from childhood. To know human nature and the world, one must take this contrast into full account. But man is long unaware of the significance of this interplay of subtle influences. Temptation does not begin until he is sufficiently grounded in love of higher things to be more interiorly open to Divine influx, with relation to the combative activity at work within him, throwing to the surface one element after another. A man must be willing to be purified, and if willing, he is to some extent conscious of that which needs regeneration. He is also prepared to admit that, in his own strength, he is far from able to win the contest. With increasing willingness comes greater receptivity. Therefore, the temptation may become more grievous and effective.

Although the psychology of temptation does not include all that enters into it as an experience, it is a direct clue to our present studies. For, much depends on the idea of the self which we have in mind when contemplating the possibility of this contest. If we look forward to it with the notion that the human self is decisive, we pride ourselves to withstand any inducement

that might intensify our love of power. Thus, we make ready to meet the tests of ambition, popularity, and praise. But, when we anticipate our spiritual future with the realization that man is a receptacle of power, not a creator or originator of life, we realize that a deepening sense of dependence on Divine providence will be the greatest source of helpfulness on the human side. To the extent we, then, become observers rather than participants, while Divine power stirs our nature to its depths, never permitting temptation to actuate us more profoundly than we can endure. We also realize that, what we are able to endure, will depend entirely upon the reinforcement which comes to our aide from the inmost.

The old-time doctrine of regeneration, as a miraculous change of heart wrought suddenly by the sovereign grace of God, left no opportunity for psychological description. As there was no ascertainable law, there was no process to be analyzed and interpreted. The Holy Ghost was said to accomplish the entire work. But, in our day, the tendency of thought is to swing to the opposite extreme and put the entire process in psychological terms. People have lost faith in sudden conversions, especially the emotional types. Instead, the change is described as a gradual discovery of the truer self. Accordingly, conversion has become a popular topic in the psychology of religion. Again, the whole process of regeneration appears to be one of gradual increase of subconscious effectiveness. Self-knowledge thus becomes the central interest. Regeneration is said to be progressive self-discovery leading to more complete self-realization. Since there is no essentially evil element in human nature, moral and spiritual progress becomes intelligible without appeal to rebirth or the creation of a new will. Moreover, the subject loses importance through neglect of the Divine agency as a principle of thought, and the tendency to limit the whole reformatory process to changes within the individual brought about by his own will, actuated by his own intelligence.

In the present doctrine regeneration is assigned to a very important place and the efficiency is attributed to the Lord. It is a necessary change because no one can enter into heaven without it.²⁷⁸ At best, man as a natural being, is born with an ability to become spiritual. Hence, the need for casting out hereditary tendencies and evils, that spiritual freedom may be attained. Since the objective is conjunction with the Lord, whatever militates against spiritual birth, must be overcome. In fact, conjunction and regeneration as a goal are virtually identical.

The process of change or preparation for regeneration is gradual and takes place in all respects according to law, not by miracle. It might be said that our whole psychology is an analysis of preparation for it. For this study has come under three heads as essential to the process: a description of man's lesser selfhood or proprium, which greatly needs regeneration; an account of the soul or spirit, with its inmost, and its profoundest potentialities; and constant reference to the truth that, as a man has no power or life of his own, acknowledgment of this dependence is everywhere essential.

True knowledge of the presence of and conjunction with the Lord being imperative, also acknowledgment of the Lord through charity and mercy in a life according to doctrine, fundamental knowledge of man's real nature is the basis. In the specific terms of the regenerative process, man's first state ("damnation") is due to inheritance from his parents, his love of self and the world.²⁷⁹ From these as fountains flow the evils of every kind with which human existence is infested. The advance from mere response to these loves comes with recognition of enjoyments there from. These let man know he is in evils. For the time being, the enjoyments seem good. Unless regenerated, man would never know what goodness is aught else than loving the world. To conform oneself in these loves and the evils due to them, would be to remain natural and become corporeal-sensual. The infernal loves of the life after death are these same

affections confirmed and intensified, among spirits who do not permit themselves to be regenerated.

Man's second state (reformation) begins with thought about heaven with reference to its joys, thus, thought concerning God as source of these joys. But love of self persists in contemplating such joy. As long as this love reigns, together with pleasure in its consequences, man assumes that his prayers are what draw him toward heaven; that he is aided by listening to preaching, attending the Holy Supper, giving to the poor, helping the needy, spending money on churches, contributing to hospitals, and indulging in other "good works." Mere thought about what religion teaches seems to bring salvation. Meanwhile, to the extent that man neglects the fact of his enjoyment of evils, he is unmindful of the consequences which his pleasure is preparing. While evils continue in the "lusts of their love" with the enjoyments they entail, there is no faith, charity, piety, or worship save in externals, with their semblance of reality and effectiveness. The second state gives man full opportunity to regard his evils as sins. To realize that a specific evil is a sin, to examine oneself with regard to it, and thereupon to refrain from willing it, is to be made ready to enter the third state (regeneration).

The third state continues the second, insofar as man, by refraining from evils as sins, has made ready for progress by shunning them: regeneration occurs through conquering these evils from the Lord, in contrast with any effort to conquer them from self. The order of life is now reversed. Once natural, man is now spiritual. The natural, when separated from the spiritual, was contrary to order. Spirituality is accordance with Divine Order in least things as in great, within and without. Man, as regenerate, acts from charity, and what is from charity is from faith also. To be regenerate is to be in Divine truths which, through life in conformity to them, makes possible the conjunction or spiritual marriage which is heaven.

The regenerative process comes within the psychological field so far as it involves man's cooperation or responsiveness. The human factors came into view with our study of the understanding, more directly with the analysis of rationality and freedom, through which man is reformed and regenerated.²⁸⁰ To be "rational," in this sense, is to understand and know what is evil and what is good, thus what is false, what is true. Through his freedom man is able to will what he understands and knows. Freedom in willing becomes active in its fullness only so far as man passes out of the state in which he is affected by enjoyment from the love of evils. With this liberation from enticements which confuse, man is able to appropriate what is good and true. Goods and truths would not be permanently his unless he could appropriate them through reason. Unless this appropriation occurred, man could not be reformed and regenerated. Furthermore, man should act from the love of goods and truths, to make them vitally his. Love of evil and falsity makes such affection impossible. Two kinds of enjoyment from loves that are opposite would be utterly impossible, like serving two masters. Accordingly, all affections due to enjoyments of evil must be removed and, with these, the evils and falsities in all their associations. Man must be able to act from enjoyment of that love which ensures freedom, in order to act in truth, with or from reason. Evils and their enjoyments reign at the center in the wicked. Whatever goods and truths may be within the individual's sphere, are in the circumference. But truths and goods reign at the center of the good man, while evils and falsities are thrown to the circumference, there to be moderated and overcome.

It is plain, then, that psychological knowledge is essential. This may seem, for the moment, to bring regeneration too close to ordinary thought, as if we could envisage the entire process. But there remains the theology, also the inmost through which Divine influx occurs. We need not venture to describe where only appreciation is possible. Granted the psychology of

regeneration with special reference to what is natural in man, the idea of regeneration may be regarded as a functioning conception, fostering the quickening process to which we all aspire if we earnestly desire to be regenerated. The process is the same, in principle, as that which came before us in studying influx, in which the Divine life passes over from inmost to outmost things.²⁸¹

Given acknowledgment of freedom and rationality as the faculties germane to regeneration, the description becomes more explicit with acknowledgment of the source of all that is good and true (as from the Lord), with the clear-cut distinction between the Lord and the human self, essential to all true insight into origins.²⁸² It is for the individual to consider in utmost detail what this utter dependence means: that all power is from Him who “possesses Power itself . . . who is Power in its essence.” One then sees that, at best, the human self is an organ capable of a function, as the eye permits seeing.

Presupposing this psychological knowledge of one’s selfhood, we turn to the Word as the Divine psychology in which all states preliminary to, and including reformation and regeneration, are portrayed, from the first chapter of Genesis forward. The principle which penetrates the Word, from first to last, is the law of the several spiritual states, including the vastation or casting out of all unregenerate possessions, a loathing and turning away from what is hostile to heavenly life, purification by temptation and fermentation, self-examination, repentance, and confession. This process includes the discovery of what is of permanent value in character, the discarding of what is detrimental, and the confirming of what is favorable to the operation of Divine life. Hence, there is a great deal to be said about vastation as essential to knowledge of the inner meaning of Scripture.²⁸³

Yet, given this minute knowledge of the process of vastation, it is not the process, as such, that is significant. For no man by analysis of the mental process will ever be able to reproduce the spiritual states. If this were possible, both reformation and regeneration would be put into human hands. It remains a question of the Divine efficiency, knowledge of which is essential if we shall rightly cooperate with the regenerative changes. Man can prepare for changes wrought from within and above. He does not control the order and time of coming of these changes.

Since regeneration is in process from earliest infancy to the close of our natural existence and, then afterwards, to eternity, every stage or plane of development which we have studied, beginning with the account of the implantation of innocence and the laying down of remains, was part of the process.²⁸⁴ Especially while man is living in the natural world, he is held in a state of reformation which anticipates regeneration.²⁸⁵ Its beginnings are not understood in the world at large. Man does not even know that there is an “internal man,” until actually undergoing the process which discloses regeneration (in part). Nevertheless, by interpretation, the process may be understood retrospectively as we proceed. Thus, our whole psychology calls for re-interpretation to make the law of regeneration explicit.

The first point to note is that the successive stages begin with the external man and proceed to the internal, begin in the natural world and continue into the spiritual. The whole was foreseen and provided for; since it was known that man, in his externality, with the weight of evil inheritance and proprium upon him, would require reformation and regeneration before he could be lifted out of his servitude. Accordingly, the process of change begins where man is dependent on material things. It takes account of all the contingencies through which he passes, and the

fluctuations incidental to the equilibrium between the two worlds (loves). A number of matters remain to be clarified when man has the eyes to see what he has passed through.

While being regenerated and becoming spiritual, man is continually in conflict and this combat is not understood. Temptation is the actual beginning of regeneration. The objective is that man may receive new life or, more truly, life itself, that he may become in a larger sense a man.²⁸⁶ When, at last, he has been regenerated, man comes into a state which is freedom indeed, rational freedom.

There is, at first, a condition of affairs described as *without life*, “dead,” with particular reference to proprium. Life from the Lord then comes by faith, the stages of which are: (1) the faith of memory, or mere knowledge; (2) faith in the understanding, or intellectual faith; and (3) faith in the heart, or the faith of love which has been defined as “saving faith” in the Lord. To *know* comes first, and this stage of regeneration we have been studying throughout, so far as knowledge of the human spirit with its functions and elements are concerned.²⁸⁷ To *acknowledge* is to take the next step, and this we have seen is exceedingly important, since man must see the situation for himself. To have faith, charity, and conscience is next in order. We reiterate these matters to show, as clearly as possible, what is psychological with reference to time.

Since the unregenerate man has no conscience, or, if he has it, in slight measure, it is not a conscience of doing good from charity, or of thinking truth from faith: it is based on an affection involving self and the world.²⁸⁸ But, with the regenerate man, there is joy according to conscience and anxiety if one is compelled to act contrary to it. There is also a new will and understanding. These faculties, in other terms, constitute and are grounded in conscience. Or, in yet other terminology, the unregenerate man is actually lacking in will. Instead, there is a

cupidity and a consequent proneness to every evil. There is also lack of understanding. Instead, there is mere ratiocination or persuasion, and a descent toward every falsity. More impressive, still, is the contrast with respect to life. With the unregenerate, there is only corporeal and worldly life and, if there is any productive thinking at all, it is from remains which give the “faculty of reflecting.” But with the regenerate, the internal man has dominion. The external is consequently obedient, and submissive. There is actual knowledge concerning the internal man. Therefore, an abounding life is made possible by quickening the spiritual mind.

The first act of the new birth or reformation pertains to the understanding. Regeneration relates especially to will and to understanding there from.²⁸⁹ The internal man needs reformation first, and through the internal, the external. Thereupon follows a conflict between internal and external. The one that conquers rules the other. Regenerate man emerges with a new will and a new understanding as distinctive signs.

Man, in his native state, is mere “earth.” Later, he is “ground,” when the celestial seed is implanted.²⁹⁰ When the seeds of goods and truths are implanted in the external man, in his affections and memory, the inverted order, previously described, still prevails. The reason, as we have noted in studying proprium, is that the lesser self brings about perversion; there is, as yet, no heavenly “own” in the internal man. The goods and truths of the internal man are not yet apparent, not dynamically present. Hence, man is chiefly external, corporeal, or natural. But, although concealed, the goods and truths are still stored in the internal man. When these come forth, there is reception of life from the Lord, thence, alternations between internal and external, in opposition; and, at adult age, the beginnings of regeneration, if the evil proprium is “put off.”²⁹¹

If the reader objects to all this detail, he is to be reminded that knowledge of the successive stages is essential; because, not until adult age, does man come into full exercise of reason and judgment, not until then, can he receive goods and truths from the Lord, to know them. All previous states are preparatory. Goods and truths are simply “insinuated” that he may, at least, have good “ground” to offer for receiving seeds of goods and truths. Essential, too, is knowledge of the facts pertaining to states of innocence and charity. Man is imbued with these states, also with knowledges derived from them, and thoughts to which they give rise. Then, when his interiors are disposed for reception, the process of regeneration can begin in earnest. Strictly speaking, the prior states all belong under the head of remains as man’s endowment for regeneration.

We also recall the analysis of the “rational” in man’s makeup, remembering that there are two rationals, one before, and one after regeneration. The first, procured through contacts by means of the senses, is empirical: due to experience by reflection on the facts of civic and moral life, and by means of the sciences in the depreciatory sense in which the term “science” is used in this psychology. There may also be knowledges of spiritual principles from the doctrine of faith or from the Word. But, at best, such knowledge reaches no further than the ideas of the exterior memory, which is closely akin to what is material. There may be semblances of spiritual principles, presented by comparison or analogies. But these are not the spiritual goods and truths themselves. The rational principle, formed by the Lord after regeneration, is by means of the affections of spiritual truth and good implanted in a “wonderful manner” in the truths of the former rational. Thence follows the vivification which is characteristic of regeneration. The residue which is of no use is separated off. At length, the spiritual truths and goods are collected as into bundles.

The natural element in man rebels because, taught that this element must be subjugated, that all its concupiscences with the confirmatory states by which they are entrenched are to be rooted out.²⁹² Left to itself amid the contest, the natural principle would anticipate utter destruction. For the natural knows only itself, totally unmindful of the immeasurable realities of spiritual life. Accordingly, man in his merely natural selfhood and draws back, fearing that he will utterly perish, unwilling to be subjugated. But regeneration is, in a sense, nothing else than precisely this subjugation, that the spiritual principle may obtain dominion.²⁹³

The process of rooting out is not, however, to be envisaged as annihilation of the contents of the natural mind. Constructively stated, it means reducing the natural to correspondence. Thus, assigned to its proper sphere, its functions rightly adjusted according to Divine order—the inverted order having wholly overcome—the natural mind will no longer endeavor to act dominantly, but will *react* as commanded, obediently, in a manner suggested by the responses of a man’s facial expressions to his changes of mood or emotion. In brief, the natural man will cease all attempts to *will*. The “old natural” must become “as nothing whatever in respect to willing.” The reason is that it was formed from evils and falsities. The “new” natural is the spiritual-natural, spiritual because, in reality, it is the spiritual element which acts through it. The new natural in thought, will, and deed, is naught else than the representative of the spiritual. “When this comes to pass, the man receives good from the Lord; and when he receives good he is gifted with truths; and when he is gifted with truths he is perfected in intelligence and wisdom; and when he is perfected in wisdom he is blessed with happiness to eternity.”

We need not dwell, therefore, on the place of despair in the regenerative process, on the influence of pride, or the part played by confession.²⁹⁴ A man must be reduced to a certain state to understand all this. To perceive hell in oneself, to despair of ever being saved, is forthwith, to

see many things in a radically different light. True confession and humiliation may then follow. Humiliation of heart before the Lord is not possible before acknowledgment of what the self actually is in its pride, arrogance, and self-love. It is a condition of regeneration that the desires acquired here, desires which would shut one out from any society in the Grand Man and lead to one's relegation to some infernal society, shall be "rooted out" while man lives in the world.²⁹⁵ This "cannot possibly be done except by the Lord through regeneration." The will must be "totally" new. From this will is to come the new derivative understanding. Hence, the need of being reborn as a little child, that we may know what is evil and false, and also what is good and true. Here again, it is knowledge which is the first essential, the significant point being that there is a fundamental transition from mere memory-knowledges to *knowledge as life*. The new will be insinuated into man entirely without his knowledge. But granted the will, knowledge as consciousness begins.

Knowledge is not "experience," as we saw when analyzing it in the light of its sources. It consists of principles and truths bestowed on the mind from above, "insinuated," at first, as the beginnings of truths and goods. Not by analysis of experience can man acquire it. But spiritual knowledge, coming to man by generating the particular from the universal within the individual mind, does indeed lead to experience. The actual results in the sphere of experience are, therefore, means of verification. This is especially the case when spiritual perception begins.

The significance of this doctrine of regeneration, with all its processes grouped in a certain order from beginning to end, lies in the fact that Providence is involved in all these laws and conditions from the outset, as conditions essential to man's welfare. Man brought on his misery, to be sure. He might have lived a life of childlike responsiveness, open at heart, innocent in spirit, obedient in will, constructive in understanding. But, he drifted into the enticements of

the flesh and the world and became external. His interiors closed upon him. So, he lapsed into one evil and falsity after another. He lapsed so far in the age preceding the Incarnation, that only the Word made flesh could have saved him. No one can ever be saved without the Lord.²⁹⁶ The Lord has delivered the spiritual world from its bondage.

For the individual there is always the possibility of a state of alienation from the Lord by evils of life and falsities of belief. So, knowledge of the redemptive process as going on, is imperative: knowledge of the fact that the Lord is nearest man in his temptation. To conquer in temptation, is to be inmosty conjoined with the Lord. And we know precisely what human cooperation calls for: the responsive states which invite the coming of the new heart which is a “will of good” and a new spirit which is an “understanding of truth.”

It is plain that this doctrine of regeneration differs greatly from recent views of conversion as described, for example, by such writers as Starbuck, James, and Coe.^{**} Conversion in the sense in which it falls within the field of description of mental processes, with reference to adolescence and emotional changes in adult life, would be classified in the present terminology as belonging to reformation only. Reformation in the specific sense, begins by means of truths and a life according to them.²⁹⁷ That is, the understanding must teach truths, and the will must do them. Combat arises when a man regards evils as sins and resolves to refrain from them. When he refrains, a door is opened.²⁹⁸ Thus, conversion in the usual sense may be regarded as in process. But regeneration, specifically speaking, is more fundamental. Many who, in the descriptions now current are said to be converted, would be novitiates only by appeal to our seer’s doctrine of the Lord. This is the primary reason why the present exposition is fragmentary

^{**} Dresser is referring pioneer psychologists of religion Edwin Starbuck (1866-1947), George Coe (1862-1951) and William James. Others include James Bisset Pratt (1875-1944), and G. Stanley Hall (1844-1924). See Christopher White, “A Measured Faith: Edwin Starbuck, William James, and the Scientific Reform of Religious Experience,” *Harvard Theological Review*, 101 (2008), 431-50.

in comparison with *The True Christian Religion* where all matters are put in doctrinal rather than in descriptive terms. The present doctrine also differs from current conceptions because of the limitations already indicated in our discussion of good and evil with reference to the possibilities of change during this our natural existence.

Chapter 44

Ethics and Religion

The moral life regarded by itself, does not occupy a leading place in this system. Civics and morals in the traditional sense of the term are assigned to their proper sphere in the social order in which we live in the natural world. The knowledge, processes, laws, and customs pertaining to such matters belong to a lower rank: Judgments passed on the morals of people on this plane do not apply to societies in the higher or spiritual degree. It is not possible to formulate an adequate science of human conduct on the inferior plane. Civil and moral sanctions suffice on their own level, as indeed moral customs endure in a given age, in a certain nations. These lesser sanctions do not substantiate the essentially spiritual principles which belong to religion. Thus the Commandments as sanctioned by society as parts of the ancient Hebrew code existed long before Moses' time. In the historical sense they are inferior to the same precepts when authorized by Divine sanction as parts of a revelation. Furthermore, there might easily be a conflict between what we disapprove of with respect to a person's morals (granted our external allegiance to customs just now in vogue) and what we are spiritually prompted to do for a brother or sister in distress. For, spiritually speaking, we take our clue from the Divine image and likeness into which the human spirit was created: we judge by the ideals of the brotherhood of man.

Then, too, the essentials of an ethical doctrine are put forth in another connection. Thus man is said to possess rationality and freedom involving free-will or the power of moral choice, with special reference to the alternatives which lead either to heaven or to hell. We also find full

recognition of moral responsibility, completed by spiritual responsibility. Conscience is recognized as profoundly real, highly important in function, decisive in authority over manifold abilities or faculties. The difference is that in this system conscience is Divine in origin, it is a religious principle. Again, the human self is morally significant. Inseparable from the self is the dual experience which allies man with private interests and worldly motives on the one hand, and with love toward God and the neighbor on the other. Finally, there is a universal principle of goodness founded in the Divine nature, counseling service for humanity. Goodness as thus articulated is in sharp contrast with such limited or lesser goods as utility, pleasure, and moral self-realization as advocated by the moral philosophers of the past. These religious principles involve a social psychology culminating in the Grand Man, which as a principle integrates rationality, freedom, responsibility, conscience, goodness through membership in the social organism, into a system of highly individualized functions. Thus a system of ethics follows from the spiritual sociology, which in turn leads to the conception of religion as a life. The ethical principles might be singled out of the doctrines as we have singled out the psychology. But the point is that ethics in this spiritual meaning of the term is inseparable from the religious doctrine.

To be righteous in the higher sense of the word is to pass beyond conventional motives, morals or customs, quickened by the realization that spiritually we are members one of another, and by the doctrine that this membership implies the spiritual world. To find our best place and to our essential work is to do far more than one's ordinary social or civic duty; it is to act from a religious motive. If we understand religion, we appreciate moral integrity at its best.

The significance of this view is that it gives greater prominence to a social conception of the self. Indirectly, it is a criticism of the morality of self-interest. The higher morality calls for the mastery of our self-love. This love once mastered, its pleasures and delights will be mastered

also. A delight is merely a regnant or associated affection and satisfaction, varying with the quality of the affection: to understand our delights is to understand our loves. Man, alone, is unable to master his affections and delights. The ideal is to live a moral life “from a spiritual origin.”²⁹⁹ Man must have Divine aid to realize this ideal of righteousness.

Indirectly, we have been studying righteousness from the first, especially in the analysis of the spirit’s inmost life, with its processes of expression in thought, will, speech, social conduct. The emphasis has been so steadily placed on understanding, rationality, doctrine, that we have been prepared for an intellectual view of religion which at first glance seems to involve neglect of the affections. But this emphasis on intellectual matters was necessary in order to guard against mere emotionalism. Thus we have given constant heed to the doctrine of degrees, to avoid all falsities; we have put stress on clarity of thought, to avoid mysticism. Indeed, the preliminary study of religion is largely a question of overcoming vagueness and explaining mysteries, that enlightenment through heavenly doctrine as the criterion may be the final test.

This approach to religion is radically different from the present-day assumption that religious experience is prior to doctrine, that revelation is merely man’s formulation of religious beliefs, and that there is no distinction in kind between revealed truth and other truth. It has recently become customary to explain all religious matters from within the field of human personality, conscious and subconscious, with a minimum degree of reference to the supernatural, if any attention is paid to it at all. This is an inversion of the doctrine that Divine revelation comes first both in time and in value, that Divine truth differs in degree, religion being Divine in origin, and human processes invariably secondary, never determinative. Granted the order of descent from the Lord, the Word and doctrines from it, the human factors are discernible

in the rightful places, and psychological description becomes possible. Prayer, worship, and all kindred matters relating to inner experience are then seen in proper perspective.

These doctrines are very explicit on all such points. The first principle of religion on the human side is love for, and acknowledgment of, the Lord as the source of all power, love, and wisdom.³⁰⁰ Religion is founded in man from Divine sources.³⁰¹ “The acknowledgment and adoration of the Lord’s Divine Human is the life of religion.”³⁰² “Religion is to be formed from truths from the Lord . . . and not from our own intelligence.”³⁰³ “The Lord has provided that all may have religion, and by it acknowledgment of the Divine, and interior life; for to live according to what is religious is to live interiorly.”³⁰⁴ By divine provision, then, the human spirit is constituted for religion, so that religion (which “makes the inmost of man”) may imbue the whole interior life, thence finding embodiment in words and deeds, and so that faith may attain its full fruition. Not to acknowledge the Lord as source and sufficiency would be to deprive oneself of religion. Not to live by Divine precepts would be merely to simulate the religious life. Hence the need for revelation, that man may have true knowledge of the Lord, that he may know the Divine commands, discriminating wisdom from falsity, and discerning the genuine elements of religious belief into which he was born and in which he was reared, in contrast with the errors in which he might, unhappily, be confirmed.

A religion which opens the understanding is greatly to be desired. But the function of the will is also important. Acknowledgment that the Lord *is*, that He is one, is Life, Love, Wisdom: these essentials are to be followed by persistent effort to put away all sins against Him, to look to oneself steadily, and not to do evil.³⁰⁵ Indeed, these are the general principles of all religion: to seek the good life as from the Lord, and also to shun evils because they are contrary to religion, contrary to the Lord. The two essentials or universals of religion, acknowledging the Lord and

repenting are, in other words, equivalent to loving the Lord and the neighbor.³⁰⁶ Knowledge of truth and good are of course essential; but the man who has not searched himself has no religion. Life in accordance with the essential doctrine is demanded if we shall become spiritual, in contrast with a moral life which is merely natural.³⁰⁷ Man can indeed live a moral life from a spiritual origin, but this means *life from religion*. This central teaching is made explicit in very many connections: that “man cannot become spiritual except through a life according to religion from the Lord.”³⁰⁸ “For religion does not consist in thinking this or that; but in willing and doing what is thought.” It follows that, as “no man can have religion except from revelation,” and as religion consists in a life according to Divine precepts, religion as *walking with God* has all the power of a seed producing just and true desires, and thence judgments and acts, in spiritual things according to the whole system of life by Divine influx. In brief, to live sincerely, justly, and well from religion is to live that essentially spiritual life which conjoins man with heaven. Since this conjunction is a marriage of will and understanding we now in what sense it involves principles which fall within the sphere of psychological description. To “live well from religion” is not then merely to think, to will, and *to do* in the sense in which increasing knowledge shows this to be right; but explicitly because it has been so enjoined in the Word, and because the Lord has commanded it.

Yet this “living well from religion” is also a life in the world, all religion having *life* for its end.³⁰⁹ To understand in what sense “all religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good,” is to take the fullness of man’s social life into account.³¹⁰ Emphasis falls then on *charity* in the specific sense in which this term is used throughout; on *faith* in its relation to truth; and on *conduct* through “use” as the “life of charity.” The source of the life which imbues

conduct is in the inmost, where inflows Love and Wisdom, meeting response according to the individual.

Since life from the Divine tends to imbue the whole spirit, man's conduct as a religious being is essentially social in the sense in which the social psychology of these doctrines implies relationships both here and in the spiritual world. In contrast with other teachings concerning the inner life, man is to find his place in the world, not by lonely contemplation, prayer, or meditation on the other world as the mystics aspired to find union with God; but man is to find his proper place by mingling with his fellows in the actual sphere of activities in which his daily existence consists.

There is one source of guidance for such conduct: in Divine wisdom as contained in the Word and the true principle of its interpretation. This means first, a Divine psychology, showing the descent of the Word to man; it also means a spiritual psychology of man's successive states as portrayed both in the Word and in his own history as a soul. Hence the psychology is in any event of vital moment. If one does not yet understand all the details of the lengthy and intricate theology, one at least knows that practical acknowledgment means *to live the life*.

There is one guiding attitude: that which is due to love toward the Lord and the neighbor. True helpfulness is by practical application to the opportunities at hand; not through the abstentions of self-sacrifice or the negations of self-denial; but by a life through the world as actually found in the light of obligations close at hand.

Love in action is the practical clue, since all true life is from love. Man shows his righteousness by his love. When this is love for the Lord and the neighbor, and the good in the neighbor as from the Lord, there will be no tendency towards self-righteousness. Hence the

importance of purity of motive is as great as the call for true doctrine. Self-examination is necessary that man may become a better channel for the Divine influx. Character is not the conscious end to be kept in view. Nor is the end self-realization or self-control through inner peace, although these may be resultants.

Little emphasis falls on religious experience as understood in our day because no man can be self-consciously cultivating experiences that induce reformation and regeneration. Nor can one have desirable experiences of the spiritual world for the asking. No stress is put on the varieties of religious experience, as if by analysis one could learn what is true and real. The reasons have been given for the most part in the discussion of the emotions. No native emotional prompting is accepted for what it merely appears to be, for it is likely to involve cupidities and other desires which must be carefully discriminated lest we add fuel to self-love. The emotions are so closely identified with passing experiences that unless we understand these experiences we will not be able to select the right emotions. So, too, in religious experiences our emotions readily run into personal sentiments which we confuse with what we “feel,” vaguely speaking, and with what we believe but probably do not rationally interpret. Hence religious emotion can hardly be a guide. Coupled with falsities it is likely to lead to various forms of mysticism, pantheism, spiritism, or deifications of the human self.

We may emphasize these points by appeal to the fact that religious interests frequently turn on two motives: the quest for salvation and the sentiment of self-righteousness. Christian history shows that large numbers of people have sought the church through fear concerning the future. The “true creed” having been accepted, the worshiper has the satisfaction which so-called right belief implies, sure in the conviction that his belief is better than that of the communicants of any other church. The accompanying delight in the chosen modes of worship is a natural

consequence. Thus the emotion tends to guarantee the truth of the creed. But only those emotions which arise through Divine influx through love toward the Lord and the neighbor are really eligible. Until we have learned the contrast between these types of emotion we are not in a position to follow even that religious emotion which appears to be highest. Self-examination, looking forward to repentance and reformation, is still imperative. What is needed is that clarifying insight which is generated by love of Divine truth, in contrast with the emotionalism which is apt to befog our intellectual processes.

Much depends on the earliest beginnings, notably in utilizing the opportunity for establishing “remains” in the mind of the child, with the hope that love for the doctrines will follow repetition of them. Much will depend on ideal associations essential to this end, especially in case of scriptural stories. Important too is knowledge of the stages through which the human mind passes, since there is a succession of spiritual states to which appeal may be made at the right junctures. The spiritual age is not necessarily the same as a person’s chronological age, but is according to truths and goods received and assimilated. Much depends too on recognition of the priorities—the Divine influx, the inmost, and the sequence from the inmost into the interiors—that we may know in what sense Divine truth, appealing to the heart, enlists the intellect. Thus the present system of doctrine differs radically from educational programs based on the old-time intellectualism, according to which doctrines were first propounded for the intellect to accept, to the neglect of the primacy of will-love.

A dynamic psychology demands indeed a dynamic religion, doctrine is needed, and doctrine must be understood. But the doctrine is intimately concerned with precisely these dynamic matters: love is the Divine creative energy involved, with a continual going forth of power; for maintenance involves perpetual creation, as permanence implies a perpetual springing

forth.³¹¹ Man as a created being is endowed with power, Love and Wisdom go forth toward man as a “one.” Hence these powers tend to be a *one* in man. This one is love, wisdom, form; unity would be impossible without these principles. From form comes quality, change of state, power to effect changes, and the other activities essential to complete existence; love being the dynamic in all these changes. For instance, no one can perceive or think anything apart from affection.³¹² Whatever the appearances to the contrary, the principle is invariable, that whatever we believe and to externally proceeds from the internal affection. Man could not of course be cleansed in his inward parts from the lusts of evil until the evils in his outward parts are put away, man’s deeds in outmost being in this respect decisive.³¹³ Yet the Divine life acts into man’s inmost, and from these into the consequent activities, and man is not purified until in heart he wills to have his lusts removed. The internal is decisive in reformation. The internal flows into the external and never the reverse. The essential is to *will* “that which knowledge, understanding, and wisdom teach.”³¹⁴ Although every man is judged according to his deeds, he is so judged because he returns to his deeds and continues to act in the same way until he is internally purified.

There is, to be sure, a difference between the love into which man was created and the love into which he was born. He was created into love of the neighbor, to the end that he might wish well to the neighbor as to himself “and even better.”³¹⁵ But the love into which he was born was in “the thick darkness of ignorance, into *natural* love, which is capable of being turned into love of self. The type of love which prevails is thus decisive in any event, and to that extend “makes the man,” carrying with it the various particular loves and derivative affections. In other words, it is always a question of “two states of life,” internal and external; and of the Divine providence which leads man by changes of state, every state having its beginning, its progression, and its end. These states are intelligible, on the one hand, in relation to the stages of

growth from infancy to the age of sixty and onwards; they are intelligible, on the other hand, in relation to the beginnings of self-love and love of the world in contrast with their opposites, all our states being held in equilibrium between the two worlds. All activities being changes of state and variations of form, we have a clue to follow even into the spheres of the life after death, by special reference to the truths of faith and the goods of charity. Since the internal and the external tend to act as one man, any light thrown upon the one helps us to understand the other: the external depends on the internal as the soul on the body.³¹⁶

Thus any ethical or religious term of special concern or interest to us for the moment finds its appropriate place in relation to the doctrines in the scale of truths and goods which pertain to the stages of man's growth. If fortunately one's thoughts about religion and morals take their cue from man's interiors, such thoughts are profoundly significant; for the interiors are in communication with heaven, man in interior form being a heaven in miniature. But more influential still is what one loves. The state of love and faith is decisive of happiness. Since man is capable of double-mindedness, it is incumbent upon him to adapt and dispose himself for redemption, that all self-divisions may be overcome.

He who lives in good, and believes that the Lord governs the universe, and that all the good which is of love and charity, and all the truth which is of faith, are from the Lord alone; nay, that life is from Him, and that from Him we live, move, and have our being, is in such a state that he can be gifted from heavenly freedom, and together with it peace; for he then trusts solely in the Lord and then has no care for other things, and is certain that all things are tending to his good, his blessedness, and his happiness to eternity.³¹⁷

Chapter 45

Visions

In recent works on the psychology of religion a distinction is drawn between the content of religious experience and the auditions, locutions, visions, and other phenomena connected with these experiences. The recipient of religious experience is no longer condemned outright because he has seen visions and heard voices. For such phenomena are now classed as secondary. It then becomes a question how to explain such matters, whether on pathological grounds, by reference to vestigial or racial remains stored away in the subconscious, or by appeal to some phase of psychical research. It should be observed, however, that the more real such experiences are for the recipient the more they affect the attitudes and beliefs of the one for whom their coming is so momentous, notably in case of the vision which came to Paul on the road to Damascus. While the skeptic who has never experienced anything akin to a vision stands unmoved, whatever tale is told him concerning such phenomena, he must at least reckon with the convictions that have come down to us from times when visions were regarded as intensely real. What is needed is an adequate psychology of such phenomena, not a makeshift to the effect that the recipient was abnormal. We can no more understand the inner content by itself than the secondary phenomena by themselves. Long before the days of the psychology of religion, the greater devotees of the spiritual life learned to distinguish between a voice or vision that was to be discounted and one that was of very great moment for them, conditioned as they were,

believing as they did. Thus the fact cannot be ignored that in scriptural times such experiences figured very largely in all the matters that have been recorded in the Bible as we have it today.

Although we are not concerned in the present inquiry with ether visions or spirits as such, we are concerned with the fact that for Swedenborg these phenomena, invariably secondary, were matters to be admitted, understood, mastered; since, for him, the spiritual world was so near, so intensely real, that its appearances must be penetrated to the core. Even if the reader, making this short excursion with us into the realm of spirits, should conclude that their entire habitat is mythical, he would still be confronted by the fact that human experience in this world is such that unnumbered thousands still believe in such a realm, that it is at best a question of rival explanations, and that it would be well to hear what Swedenborg has to say in his effort to press through to the end of his inquiry.

We have then the significant facts to consider that for Swedenborg the spiritual world was so real that he dwelt with it through a considerable portion of his life, and that he has been rather casually classed as a visionary because he believed in such matters, without any attempt to learn why he regarded the spiritual world with such assurance. Unless we brush preconceptions aside to see why visions and spirits, although secondary, were germane to that world, we can hardly understand the force of our seer's teaching in regard to life in the natural world. Thus to make an excursion into his world is to note the fact at the outset that for him there is a distinction between real and apparent visions, between good and evil spirits; hence a distinction between regions in the spiritual world, and a significant contrast between the forces which environ us here on earth. It may seem absurdly out of date even to mention evil spirits in our day; but we still have on our hands for explanation the experiences involving evils, temptations, and other inner conflicts; and we may try out the hypothesis anew that these partly explained experiences bear

relation to those reinforcing influences which our seer believed he saw in overt exercise, while we see only the baneful results.

Our study begins with a brief reference to visions as they are said to have occurred in scriptural times. We have seen that the process of conveying a revelation to men in the natural world involved several modes of communication. Some of these include the visible presence of an angel. Others became active by means of visions relating to the spiritual world. We are not now concerned with the content of such experiences. Since visions employed in connection with a revelation are merely instrumental, they are not intelligible as ends in themselves. Nor were they sought by the recipients. The chief consideration is the element of reality implied, in contrast with visions classed as unreal.

The visions of the prophets are explicable by appeal to a cardinal principle in this psychology: the existence of exterior equipment, especially the organ of inner vision known as the spiritual eye. It was the opening of the spiritual sight that made possible prophetic experiences. When this occurred the external self was illumined by the internal. The ensuing visions harmonized with the internal states of the prophet. Those seen by Moses were unlike visions beheld by the other prophets. The more completely the interiors were opened the more nearly perfect the vision. This interior vision disclosed real beings in the spiritual world, that is, angels in the sense in which the term is always used in these doctrines: not strange creatures with wings or beings who had never needed earthly existence, but human persons who had lived on some earth and had attained a higher level of spiritual development than that of spirits. Thus angels were seen by Abraham, Lot, Manoah, and others. But visions were not necessarily of angels or spirits. Sometimes they were for purposes of inmost revelation or perception, when the interiors were fully opened and the visible presence of an angel was not essential. A vision

presented before a man whose interiors had been closed, because of the limitations of his earthly experience, was differently conditioned from those previously mentioned, although such a vision also fulfilled a Divine purpose.

Sometimes the end was achieved by means of prophetic visions and dreams only. Again, the communication was by dreams, by speech, and also by visions. So, too, influx into the prophet was at times partly from heaven and in a measure from the world of spirits. With some the experience was produced into the speech itself, and into the gestures, thus into the body. The prophets did not then speak for themselves. They spoke from spirits occupying their bodies. So the prophets functioned as controlled mediums. Indeed, some prophets through whom angels spoke and acted were possessed by spirits so that scarcely a vestige of consciousness was left, save that the prophets were still aware of their own existence.³¹⁸ Certain spirits were employed for this purpose who did not want to obsess men, but merely wished to enter their corporeal affections: by entering into these the spirits controlled the rest of the organism. Thus the spirits seemed to possess corporeal life as if in bodies of their own.

Under other conditions there were influxes into the prophets so that the man exercised his own discretion and thought, save that the spirit speaking with him delivered a message chiefly by the inward way. The influx was not then into thought and will but merely into a discourse coming by inward audition. At times the recipient was withdrawn from the body and carried by the spirit into another place. Prophets referred to as “in vision” were in their spirit so that they saw things in heaven, the eyes of the spirit being open, the bodily eyes closed. Hence while receiving the visions the prophet readily seemed to be carried from place to place. Ezekiel, Zechariah, Daniel, and John when he wrote the Apocalypse were “in vision” in this meaning of

the term. Thus was disclosed to Ezekiel a new temple and a new earth, and John Beheld very many heavenly things.

By genuine visions are meant really existing things seen in the spiritual world, as such things appear when man's interior sight is opened by the Lord. The term "thing" sometimes refers to what appears to the thoughts and affections of angels as aids to the foretelling of truths through the prophets. Again, the vision took the form of a representative dream, and the "things" were not actually seen. The things seen by John were representative visions embodying inner principles to be disclosed. Hence these visions were produced for a certain purpose only.

A vision is distinguished as real in the sense that it corresponds exactly to the thoughts and affections of angels, in contrast with a vision classed as unreal because it did not appear in the internal form, but was produced by spirits through fantasies. A vision seen in a fantasy is an illusion. Visions occurring before good spirits in the spiritual world are normally representative of heavenly principles, hence these visions are perpetual. A representative dream inflowing from heaven in fulfillment of a special purpose is unlike visions in general because the body is then asleep. The purpose of a vision may be to disclose a truth which corrects a falsity. The usual purpose was a revelation about doctrine. Angels were regularly used as instrumentalities in Divine visions. In lesser instances spirits served as intermediaries. Divine visions include the representatives in heaven above mentioned.

By contrast, a diabolical vision pertains to magical matters in hell; such experiences as those induced by enthusiastic spirits who, deceived by their delirium, mistook themselves for the Holy Spirit.³¹⁹ Fantastic visions are the deceptive mockeries of an abstracted mind, a mind which in modern terms would be described as having a complex. A vision was explicitly Divine in the

case of the prophets both because of the special function and because of the special state induced for the occasion. A Divine vision could not be classed an illusion, for it is not an experience seen through the physical eyes and misconceived. It is an inner experience beheld by the spiritual eyes while the bodily eyes are shut. The organism as a whole is in a state harmonious with the purpose to be attained. Visions of this stamp are said not to occur in this day because neither the experience in itself nor the representatives would be understood. The visions seen by John, for example, involved mysteries (*arcana*) which baffled the world till the clue was discovered. Biblical scholars are still trying out hypotheses concerning the Apocalypse. Our seer devoted eight volumes to the interpretation of it. His view is not likely to be acceptable save to those who have first verified the psychology and the theory of correspondences on which it is founded.

Visions in general are to be distinguished from the giving of revelation because the Lord spoke with the prophets, not by influx into their interiors, but through the spirits sent to them to be appropriately filled for this specific function, when the inspired words were to be dictated. The difference was this: When the prophets were “in vision” they were put into a spiritual state to see whatever by Divine purpose it was intended should be seen in heaven. But when the Lord spoke with them the prophets were normally aware of their bodies and heard Jehovah speaking.³²⁰ These two states are to be carefully distinguished. It is not declared that the prophets spoke the Word from the Holy Spirit, but that they spoke it from Jehovah. The Word was not revealed in a state of the spirit for which allowances had to be made, as if the vision had deflected the heavenly light into relative obscurity. The Word was spoken in utter distinctness. Nevertheless, there were given in the context of the revelation, as in the Apocalypse, visions which, like that of the white horse, needed specific interpretation. Imaginary and visionary reasoning might perchance be associated with a vision, if one were to read the Word under a

falsity. Visionary thought differs radically from revelation. A visionary person as such would be a victim of both falsities and illusions, responsive to no heavenly purpose.

Genuine visions of scriptural types are always distinguished from visionary states by their purpose. For the prophets “in the spirit” while apparently separated from the body, were not aware of the distinction between spiritual and bodily states here made plain. Nor does the visionary know this distinction by experience. But our seer worked amid visions and other experiences which were contrasted both with his own consciousness and with the doctrines promulgated. Such visions were properly speaking “waking visions.” They were experiences occurring amid full awareness of conditions and events in the natural world, with equally clear consciousness of conditions and events in the spiritual world. The purport of such experiences is not that these visions have value in themselves, but that knowledge of their meaning is essential to complete understanding of the relationship between experiences of the two worlds. Furthermore, it is important to distinguish between such experiences and mysticism, and to note the difference between experiences of a spiritistic type and those having value for purposes of a revelation.

In popular circles it has not been customary to distinguish between (1) personality, including the subconscious or subliminal region; (2) experiences of a psychical type, such as telepathy or trance-phenomena; and (3) the meaning of these experiences in the context of systematic thought concerning the spiritual world. Interest in this complex situation becomes essentially psychological whenever the effort is made to adhere to these distinctions in order to determine what are the psychical matters of facts, such as any items in the context of an experience attributed to the spiritual world, to communications from other minds in this world, or to the existence of an inner “faculty” like clairvoyance or clairaudience. Thus a sentence

received by supposed inward audition would be psychical. So would the experience of seeing an alleged spirit clairvoyantly.

Even granted the existence and near-by presence of spirits likely to evoke psychical experiences in “sensitives” who are so inclined, such an interest would be far afield from a revelation of Divine truth with reference to the understanding of the Word. We need not then refer to spiritism save to indicate its dangers and illusions, especially for those who fail to discriminate between the spiritual and the psychical. Spiritism means interest in spirits and their communications as such. Interest in revelation subordinates all means of communication even in case of visions classed as real. The test is truth, not experience or visions. The truth would remain if all psychical phenomena were denied. Secondly, the test is the existence of the spiritual world, not the presence of spirits and angels that might be summoned out of its precincts. One who believes in revelation and in the reality of the spiritual world as basic is in a position to consider what is misleading in the phenomena in question. Granted that man is ruled by means of angels and spirits through whom he has communion with heaven, there is no reason for seeking to become conscious of these presences, as if one might actually hear what they have to say. For these intermediaries are not aware of their functions in our behalf. What we know with respect to any experience coming through their instrumentality is simply our own changing states. Our part in any event is to give heed to the ways of Providence, whatever means Divine Wisdom may employ.

Man might indeed have retained the open vision, so that he could speak with angels and spirits, distinguish their types, and apprehend their relation to the spiritual world. For as a spirit man is normally one with spirits in that world. Corporeal interests might again recede and man might once more be openly among spirits and angels. But as his interiors were long ago closed

we are concerned with man's present obscure states, and the possible means of access to his inner life through which may come reformation leading to regeneration. This psychology describes man's obscure states in contrast with the truths he might see where he able to penetrate psychical mists to the clear light of heaven. For this reason our interest is limited, with no door left open for possible communication with spirits, as if by some miracle we had acquired the open vision were suddenly competent to distinguish real from unreal visions.

In passing we note the fact that angels are in all respects men and women who have lived as we live now. A spirit is simply a person who has cast off all earthly garments. As people differ in spiritual development here, so they do there. Since no one suddenly leaps into a higher degree of spirituality, so no one who serves his evil inclinations here becomes wholly good when he enters the spiritual world. It is therefore a question of types and contrasts there as here.

A spirit is, in brief, a substantial being with a definite form, essentially human in structure and organization. Hence the absurdity of the notion which once prevailed that spirit signifies mere breath, as if it were a vapor which might be dissipated, or an abstract thought which might die. A spirit is a real organic being who could be seen (granted the open vision), who could be heard (if we enjoyed inner audition), who could be felt (if we were able to discern the difference between a psychical fact and a natural external fact). Spirits and angels fulfill functions in the Divine Order by the same laws which cover our existence. Yet their functions are to be regarded from one point of view, ours from another.

We note, for instance, that while spirits are near enough to be seen the "organic things which constitute their bodies "may be far away, hence they may appear in a space where they are not present.³²¹ Nevertheless, all spirits and angels keep constantly in their situation. This, their

situation pertains to the reason for their intimate relation to man: that man may have communication with heaven, that through them man may be ruled by the Lord, and that through them might inflow life from the Lord which is essential to man's existence.³²² It is through their organic substances that spirits speak. Hence to the discerning eye their specific presence is known by their influx into different parts of the body.

To inquire into the differences peculiar to spirits would be to find that these are always describable in psychological terms. All things there are adapted to their sensations, which include all sense-processes we know except those pertaining to taste: in place of taste-sensations there is something analogous which is adjoined to the sense of smell.³²³ The sensitive life of spirits is twofold, real and not real, the latter being due to their proprium. Spirits reason much more fully and acutely than men, also act more subtly. Their presence with man is according to man's loves. Accordingly, the spirits with a man change with his changes of state.

To pursue the psychological differences still further would be to realize why communication with spirits is in every respect undesirable. For when a spirit has such access to a man that he enters into all matters of his memory the spirit knows not only thoughts which the man knows; but also the least detail of those thoughts and the man's affections, even "persuasions" which serve as clues for inducing illusory visions.³²⁴ Ordinarily, spirits do not know that they are with man. Those that are associated with man by the Lord are good ones. But if man were to communicate even with those spirits such converse would favor the communicating spirit. Moreover, evil spirits are invited by the man himself. Thus his affections would tend to attract the most unfortunate relationships. Granted access to a man, evil spirits could then insinuate fantasies according to their deadly hatred of men.

Chapter 48

Spirit and Body at Death

The first state after death is so nearly like the present existence that a man readily supposes he is still in this world.³²⁵ When told that he is a spirit and is in the other life he is filled with wonder and amazement. For, finding himself like unto what he was before in form, senses, desires, thought, he easily assumes that he is still in the natural world. This opinion is especially to be expected from people who did not while here learn the great truth that there are spirits already dwelling in the spiritual world in their inmost selfhood. Granted the ore excellent sensitive faculties already mentioned, when these begin to function the new life develops in such a way that comparison between the other life and this is scarcely possible. The salient fact in the new life which thus begins is that man is gifted by the Lord with the requisite power for his new experiences. In imagination we may conceive what this more exquisite consciousness is by reference to the fact that while the general perceptual experience continues this perception is in each respect by means of finer senses, finer appetites, desires, affections, and love, all these activities being in a more surpassing degree of experience.³²⁶ When there is thought, for example, it is more perfect. Speech comes as before, but more directly from within in a language which all can understand. What is interior prevails. Man appears exactly like a man because as man in actuality he has always been a spirit. He has never really been a mere body, as he has seemed to be when judged by appearances. To picture man's embodiment or appearance as made visible after death is then to take the clue in all respects from his finer sensibilities and from the affections which without hindrance clothe themselves in outward expression. The successive

states after that of the first amazing discovery that death has occurred are those needed to bring man into adjustment to be real selfhood in its entirety.

The proposition that, despite this intimate disclosure on man can be reformed after death, is qualified not only as already indicted but also by the fact that those who have “lived well and have acknowledged God” will be instructed by the angels.³²⁷ The Lord also provides that all who die in infancy shall be saved, wherever they were born. Moreover, there is granted to every man after death ample means of amending his life if that be possible. By predestination all men are for heaven. Any other predestination would be contrary to Love, which is infinite, and contrary to Wisdom, which is also infinite. If some are not saved it is because they have not so chosen. Love “wills that man should feel in himself the happiness and blessedness of heaven, since otherwise it would not be heaven to him.”³²⁸ Means of salvation having been provided for all, including ample opportunity for changes in the life after death compatible with the structure man has acquired in the world, the extent to which variations occur becomes an individual matter. The chief consideration is not the departures from the standard, but the principle of the Divine providence, with its objective for the human race.

It is possible to picture the separation between spirit and body at death so that we may see what substances remain and what ones continue from the point where the separation occurs? This may be done in a measure with accuracy. For the teaching in this respect is that “after death every man lays aside the natural which he took from the mother and retains the spiritual which is from the father, together with a kind of border from the purest things of the natural about it. With those who enter heaven this is beneath. . . .”³²⁹

This border (*limbus*) is the intermediate substance between spirit and body in the guise of a psychical aura or finer ether. The less pure substances, those of the brain, are left behind. These, we have seen in our study of the body with respect to the action of mind on brain, are such that will and understanding can be in them “in first principles” without being in any sense identical with them, without having been produced by them. They are also such that mental action can take place into the fibers, thus making the influx from spirit to body complete at the point of transition which used to be called a “chasm,” as it must somehow be bridged. What is essential to the bodily organs and processes remains with the body. What is essential to the mind in its functional activities remains with the mind, howbeit the spirit will utilize the mind in new modes in the life after death and in inner states already mentioned as having been acquired in this life.

To be discarnate is to be without a material body but not to be devoid of a body. The spiritual body has been in the process of formation or growth while the spirit was united to the flesh. The body of flesh and blood having been thrown aside as an old garment, the new body stands forth, corresponding point by point with the development of the spirit which it manifests. The spiritual form as we have noted throughout our study is highly organized in its detailed structure, psychologically understood; while interiorly its form is that of the Love and Wisdom in whose image and likeness man as a spiritual being was created. Externally or objectively, we may then picture man’s new body by reference to the human form; interiorly, our clue is still taken from above, from the Divine as non-spatial, from Love and Wisdom. Granted ready response on man’s part to the life of charity, we may in imagination see the newer face and form lit up by the light of heaven, eternally young with the beauty of that light, manifesting its wisdom in greater measure than in the life on earth.

The question what kind of body clothes the spirit after death naturally suggests by contrast the theory of “karma” and reincarnation. Emphasis in the present doctrine falls throughout on coming to judgment here in this world where the issues of life can best be met. But this is not because the spirit may be compelled to return to earth for successive incarnations until the last of these issues has been faced and overcome. The universality of law is a central doctrine. There is said to be no escape from its dominion here or hereafter. Man suffers or enjoys the consequences of his deeds, and the accumulations of these deeds, with their affections and attendant states, will persist so that man’s future life will be determined by his existence here. This aggregation of deeds wrought in the natural world is not, however, the same as karma. The theory of karma involves the idea of necessary rebirths in the flesh until, by attaining liberation through “Nirvana,” all conflicts due to competing desires shall have ceased. According to the present doctrine the change takes place, not in the accumulated deeds, but in the spirit; for man’s deeds are not the determinants: it is what man takes to himself by acts or will according to his love that determines his future. Moreover, the motive for overcoming the effects of his conduct is not that of individual salvation that he may throw off “bad karma;” it is the motive of love toward the Lord and the neighbor, and salvation is from the Lord, not from one’s individual efforts. Moreover, the consequences of man’s life here may best be seen in the experiences which immediately follow death, in the world of spirits.

The initial experience in that intermediate region is bestowed upon man, in the Divine providence that man may see the prevailing love as it can never be seen here, in the light of its complete motivation and full consequences. Granted the choice which such a disclosure makes possible, there ensues an unending experience in the spiritual world, in a spiritual body which could never be substituted for a body of flesh and blood without an utter inversion of Divine

order. Man is not then drawn into his future by a mechanical process attracting him to another rebirth; the process goes on in response to his interior love, *making selection* amidst his responses to the ministrations of angels, and is primarily due to the Divine agencies which foster spiritual change and afford opportunity for modifying the collateral affections which sustain the ruling love.

The alleged necessity that children dying in infancy must be born again in the flesh is offset by the ministrations of angels in the spiritual world, where supplementary opportunities compensate for the losses of bodily existence. So, too, the unfortunate are cared for according to their needs. Spirits, formerly embodied in the fleshy world, serve ends (in pairs) by accompanying and aiding people who are still in the body. So too still more advanced spirits and angels serve in pairs. The experiences of the world of spirits and the ensuing life beyond that sphere are, in general, the equivalent of experiences which theosophists are unable to explain save on the assumption that there are successive incarnations. In this teaching both reformation and regeneration are differently regarded, because the doctrine of the Lord is central.

In the theosophical world there are planes, earth-bound spirits, and various principles which resemble those of this doctrine at certain points; but the underlying structure is radically different. Theosophy was developed out of a view of the universe in which there was neither a Lord (save Buddha himself) nor a human spirit in the sense in which the term “spirit” is here used. The psychology of Buddhism centered about the mental aggregate and karma in terms of which human personality was regarded, rather than about a substantial entity endowed with will and understanding. The “wheel of life” to which the assembled karma was bound was envisaged as a necessary cycle of experiences with a transmitted “thirst” imbuing them. The central effort

in the successive incarnations was the overcoming of this accumulation, with its implied will-to-live.

But, granted a substantial entity or spirit as the persisting core of experiences gathered in the natural world, freedom is to come by penetrating much more deeply into the self than the point where desire or thirst reigns; it is to come when, misdeeds having been admitted as sins against the Lord, man wills to have his sins removed, that the resulting states of reformation and regeneration may follow—with respect to the one Lord and Savior to whom first acknowledgment is due. Emphasis falls on will, thus on love; and only secondarily on deeds, as expressing love (through various attendant desires). The law over all this process is love; not the law of correspondence to karma, but that of correspondence between spiritual and natural things.

The central question, granted the existence of deeds under a law which no one can evade is this: Why not face the issues of life *with regard to the spirit*, which was created into the image and likeness of God? For with the acknowledgment of the Lord, from the motive of love toward the Lord and the neighbor, there is no necessity for being cast again and again into the vehicle of the flesh. It is the law of the Divine providence overall which determines the process at those points where evils are permitted that their motivation may be seen. This one existence in the flesh, supplemented by the experiences after death, is decisive in a concentrated way—in contrast with the long-drawn out process of successive incarnations. Hence the disclosures in question are infinitely more important, for the Lord is ready at any moment to show us how we are bound by our cupidities. Granted at least a moderate degree of responsiveness on our part, while here, we are justified in believing that everything will be done for us in the spiritual world which may still be needed to show us our bondage, to make us aware who and what we are, and what has brought our suffering upon us. And what we are shown to be *will not be our deeds*

alone—as hauntingly as they may be revealed to us for the time being; it will be our actual interior state, more or less closed to spiritual influx, more or less withdrawn from heavenly things. Finally, this realization will be conclusive because we shall see that we already possess a spiritual body, reared while we were here. It would seem incredible that, clothed with such a body, we should ever again put on a physical body, reverting to its senses and its modes of contact with the world. But the truth in the doctrine of reincarnation will remain with us as a symbol: beholding ourselves as we are, we shall see ourselves clothed according to our inward state, with a different countenance. We may well assimilate the truth in the doctrine of karma as an appeal to people to face the issues here in the natural world that we may come to judgment under the opportunities which this life affords. The falsities may be left to fall aside without special consideration. Some of these are due to ignorance of the fact that man possesses two memories. There is no basis for the assumption that in this existence any man, however enlightened, could ever recall his past incarnations: what we recall (under illusion), “as if” we had lived on earth before, is some experience which we have imperfectly analyzed because we lack true psychology. The illusions centering about memory are so many, so frequent and far-reaching, that a separate volume would be required to consider them. This is especially true with regard to the fact that earth-connected spirits who have recently passed over have the finest opportunity in the world to draw upon the natural memories of people still in the flesh, to mislead them. True knowledge of our memories should enable us to undermine all misconceptions of this type, it should help us to recall that *an illusion of memory can be as real as life itself*. What we are practically concerned with is not the mere experience as recalled, but its significance. Granted that our remembered experiences, as merely our own, appertain to the present life solely, it becomes a question of what the past has to teach.

As an appealing writer once put the matter, the question which we might address to anyone in need, to everybody in trouble or distress, is this: “What has brought you to this pass?” For the imperative consideration is the process of cause and effect. This is the process most of us seek to dodge. But life will not let us evade it. The issues are forced home with tremendous emphasis. When we see them clearly, frankly admitting our participation and responsibility, we are free to move straight on into spiritual liberty, under Divine guidance. What seemed a stern process of relentless law proves to be a gently merciful process amid Divine love as the sustaining presence by which the spirit has been tenderly led and wisely cared for. We need not trouble to clear away all the perplexities due to our radical misconception of the great life-round through which we have been passing; these will clear away with insight into the central truth, when we realize the significance for us of the spiritual world. For it is essentially a question of *life* (not deeds, necessity, mechanical reaction), namely, facing toward the light that is leading us, with eagerness on our part to meet present opportunities as best they may be met, each on its own plane. On the natural plane, life takes on its outermost forms; both motives and thoughts tend toward what is externally “last” or concrete. But the *first* is that for which the last was made. Hence everything turns on right understanding of ultimates. Since the most external is a basis on which the most internal can build, we have an exceptional opportunity in the life that now is.

Chapter 49

The Seer's Method

The change in the life of our seer due to the opening of his spiritual sight brought us to the point, in Chapter 3, in our inquiry concerning his doctrine of the soul, where spiritual perception was adopted as his clue in contrast with the analysis of sense-experience, the study of anatomy, physiology, and the other special sciences. The seership which had indirectly been his guide in the scientific period then came to the fore as explicit and unmistakable. Its disclosures pertained more directly to biblical interpretation and the spiritual world. But they also related to the present life as adapted to this world. Hence we limited our inquiry to the type of psychology which guided the seer in his investigations, postponing issues which could not profitably be discussed until we had considered his method. To understand this method it will be necessary to revert to the transitional experiences prior to his illumination, and consider in some detail what was his conscious part in making ready for his greater life-work.

Already in his scientific period Swedenborg saw not only that all life is of and from the Divine, and that the Divine life flows into the forms that are most interior; but that something more acute than an analytical study of the soul is needed. The investigator must also look to himself, change his disposition, not alone by using his reason as persistently as possible, but by radically turning away from all evils, abhorring them and never permitting the mind to revert to its former state of subservience. This radical change in one's mental life, with its habits and prevailing interests, can be accomplished only by remaining a longer time in a higher mental

state in which one practices the virtues which sustain perfect love. Thus in time one can grow into successfully permanent resistance to lower mental states and eventually become free from them. Thus by Divine help one can put off the old man and put on the new. One will then be in a position to be raised into a genuinely spiritually state.

Accordingly, Swedenborg modified his life, adopted rules for the study of Scripture and for adjustment to the world while he was carrying on these studies, and sought by earnest effort to be born anew. Later, he saw a Divine purpose in all these changes which he appeared to be making through his own decision merely. He saw that spiritual truths were disclosed to him so that they could be “taught and understood naturally and rationally.” This was because spiritual truths correspond to and terminate in natural truths upon which they rest. These truths led him to new scriptural studies which he pursued for many years as his primary interest, while the solution to the problem of the soul held over from the scientific period came in incidentally rather than as the central consideration. Our interest is still to follow his quest for the soul.

Hard upon the earnest desire for a new birth came a period of struggle with various temptations, while Swedenborg sought to overcome his sins and become purified. During this time he had a remarkable series of dreams which disclosed lines of work he was presently to pursue. Even though he gave himself more resolutely to the spiritual work which he was then beginning, he passed through the severest wrestlings and the most intense inner conflicts. These dreams and struggles began while he was still engaged on such works as *The Animal Kingdom*, or the peculiar work which terminated this stage of his career, his *Worship and Love of God*. By day he would work on these books. At night he would pass once more into his interior struggles. He was like two men, the one investigating and writing books as if he were always to continue according to the usual analytical and literary methods; the other wholly consecrated to the new

work which he believed was directly from the Lord, although he was unable to respond as he would to his guidance, and sometimes he even fought against the Holy Spirit.

Swedenborg had undoubtedly lived an upright life. All records bear testimony to that. Yet we find him throwing himself down before the Lord as if he had been the greatest sinner. This he believed to be necessary in order to rid himself of all interior evil, for he seemed unworthy to receive the greater wisdom which he hoped was not to be given him. As long as there was any desire save to do God's will he put himself through this severe self-examination, praying to have every interposing element removed, aware that he could not gain the desired end in his own strength.

"I have for my motto," he writes in his diary, "God's will be done: I am Thine and not Mine; as therefore I have given myself from myself to the Lord, He may dispose of me after His own pleasure." Again he says, "I prayed to God that I might not be my own, but that God might please to let me be His." Referring to one of the visions which came to him at that time, one in which he saw a profusion of gold, he says, "It denotes that the Lord, who disposes all things, gives me in spiritual and worldly matters all that I need, whenever like a child I cast my care upon Him." He also saw in a vision some beautiful bread presented to him on a plate. "This," he explains, "was a prediction that the Lord Himself will instruct me, as soon as I have attained that state in which I shall know nothing and in which all my preconceived notions shall be removed from me; which is the first state of learning."

Presently, we find him seeing his way through what was at first a maze of obscure dreams and visions difficult to interpret so that he puts aside once for all his scientific work *The Animal Kingdom*, to devote himself to his intermediate work, the *Worship and Love of God*. One

of Swedenborg's biographers calls the latter book "an expectant daydream of his theology, abundant in charming details, and crowned with significance." Swedenborg began the book when he was fifty-six, while still in the throes of temptation. It is a sort of prose poem on the creation of the earth, the birth and education of Adam and Eve. It has been surmised that the writing of it lightened his mind while he was undergoing purification at night. The book is neither scientific nor philosophical, and it has little meaning for our inquiry. We note with interest, however, that the life of the first man is described as an existence attended by ministering angels who taught man the order of his life and gave him heavenly wisdom.

Swedenborg again takes up his doctrine of forms and degrees, and anticipates his later teaching, especially when he discusses correspondence. "Nothing," he says, "in any case exists in nature which does not in a type resemble its origin, or soul; and as this origin is from heaven (for all uses, as was said, are ends designed by heaven), therefore things natural and things celestial must of necessity agree with each other, according to the order first induced, or the most perfect order. . . ." ³³⁰ He plainly teaches that all life is that the soul is a real substance, and that God is the true or simple substance whence all things originate. He says that life is ultimately love, and that the life is of such quality as the love. The volume contains many ideas in the form of notes which we find fully developed in a later work, written some years after the clear opening of his spiritual sight, the *Divine Love and Wisdom*. The soul is described as a recipient of two kinds of influences: from above come the heavenly influences to which all wisdom is due, also all real love; while from below come all influences from the world. Man has the power to turn in his responsiveness in either of these directions, for he has "two ways or places of reception, of two guests." ³³¹ The difficulty with those who adopt materialism is due to persistent looking in the wrong direction, whereas the gaze should be inward and upward if reality is to be

distinguished from appearances. There is no solution of the problem of the nature and sphere of the soul while our thought is limited to the mere testimony of the bodily senses. What Swedenborg calls “natural reason” is limited to this approach by the external way. But the soul is distinctly superior, and that which is superior receives its quickening from above. Life from the central source can indeed flow from what is superior into what is inferior, and from the inferior to that which is more external, into the body. But the process is never reversed. All influx or communication is by means of this order or law. Since then the life and light which imbue the soul are from above, and man is a “little universe” carrying heaven and the world within him, the material world should be looked upon as an “expression” of the spiritual.

Swedenborg seems to have been convinced from his youth up that the great change was coming to him and which became clear with the full opening of his spiritual sight, although in one of his references to his experience he suggests that he did not expect to enter such a completely spiritual state. The year 1743 is assigned as the date of the opening of this inner sight, but it was not until 1745 that Swedenborg found himself fully admitted into converse with angels and spirits. There were phases of this new experience which he did not understand at first, and his understanding evidently kept pace with the interior changes which were in process. In *Heaven and Hell* he says, “I was elevated into heaven interiorly by degrees, and in proportion as I was elevated by understanding was elevated, so that I was at length enabled to perceive things which at first I did not perceive, and, finally, such things as it had been impossible for me to comprehend.”³³² After the period of the perplexing dreams, extraordinary lights and voices, which he describes in his *Spiritual Diary*, came direct speech with a certain spirit and more definite ideas regarding the work which he was to do. It is an interesting fact that the private diary in which the strange dreams are recorded covers a short period only, from March 24, 1744. Hence

this period must be regarded as merely transitional, and not decisive with reference to the period that follows.³³³ Swedenborg does not appear to have entered into these experiences with emotional intensity, but to have regarded them with the persistent keenness of the scientific observer intent on learning their significance. He guarded against the deflecting powers of the emotions and kept himself from giving free play to the imagination, well aware that he might be led astray. He even entertained the doubt that his visions were fantasies of his own mind, but found himself convinced to the contrary because he was being led toward a definite end. Moreover, his active life in the world gave him a normal contrast. Hence his consciousness was unlike that of the recluse who lives apart from daily contact with worldly people. His conversion was not sudden, but from the point of view of his interior experiences was the fruit of his whole life since childhood, and from the point of view of his quest for the soul it was the gradual consequence of the persistent union of scientific investigation with religious willingness to submit to any regenerative process essential to the realization of his purpose.

A direct clue to the seer's method in acquiring his psychology is found by noting the manner in which he produced the *Arcana Coelestia*. It would appear to be a very special process if our seer claimed that the words of that work in many volumes were dictated to him. But he does not make this claim. It would also seem exceptional if he held that angels or spirits gave the information or told him what to write. He explicitly says that this was not the case but claims that his wisdom came "from the Lord alone." This means that it came by a universal way, and we would expect to have this mode of bestowal of heavenly wisdom made plain. This our seer does with great force. He does indeed claim to have received information from the spiritual world with regard to the state of man in ancient times, the ancient Word, and other matters not available by documentary evidence. But this information is used as any fact concerning natural

things is used. This information was not obtained by automatic writing. Our seer does not fall into a trance to obtain his revelations. Certain references to his work are entirely at fault on these points. Hence his doctrines should not be called “trance-revelations.” We have found a wholly different clue in our study of the processes by which revelations are given. Our first interest is to note evidences of the universality of the seer’s method.

There are those, our seer explains, who read the Scriptures from spiritual love of truth and are glad at heart when they see the truth. When they thus read they are under Divine enlightenment, and this enlightenment is for all, according to spiritual law. “This illumination descends from the Lord through heaven from the light there, which light is Divine truth; to them therefore it is given to see truths from their own light, and this is in the Word, because the Word is Divine truth, and in it are treasured up all the truths of heaven. But they alone are in this light who are in the two loves of heaven, which are love to the Lord and towards the neighbor; for these loves open the interior or superior mind, which is formed to receive the light of heaven, and through which that light flows in and enlightens them.”³³⁴

Man has the power to look in two directions, toward the world and self, or toward heaven and the Lord. To look up is to raise the interiors of the mind so that they shall become ready to receive wisdom by Divine influx. The light of the spirit of truth, every ready to guide all men into the truth, is then freely given. Everything depends on what we look for. If we read the Scriptures through curiosity or with a desire to confute, we find but little in them. If, however, we try to shut out externals and everything in our nature that might intervene and read to be enlightened by the Spirit, the results will be like the attitude of approach. To receive great benefit we must put forth exceptional effort. We could hardly expect to test the wisdom which comes

through such enlightenment without putting ourselves into the same attitude by persistent endeavor to be quickened.

Through this enlightenment a man becomes aware of his “inner dictate.” He then carries within his thought a certain standard or spirit, a point of view which by long usage becomes as distinct as a language the elements of which belong together in a certain grammatical structure, a language which we put in contrast with another tongue belonging to a very different group of languages. To this dictate we may be referred every perplexity. To it one endeavors to be ever faithful. As applied to the study of the Scriptures it may be compared to the nature and value of conscience in the moral field. By the aid of conscience we endeavor to be consistent with what we know to be right and true. By aid of the dictate the effort is to know and be faithful to the consistent spiritual meaning and follow that meaning alone, as the Lord’s Word. To acquire this dictate it is necessary to put aside all allegiance to doctrinal authorities and institutions; for the seat of true authority is in Divine truth, which must be spiritually discerned. The dictate is different from the inward certainty or intuition on which people put personal emphasis according to their type; for it discloses universal principles, it is above the personal equation. It corresponds in matters of spiritual truth to what we call disinterestedness in dealing with our fellowmen, when we are actuated by standards of justice and impartiality. To adopt the dictate in all seriousness is to realize the promised “spirit of truth” as the guidance which shall not only bring all teachings of the Gospels to remembrance but lead the way to their complete fulfillment. Thus to believe is to hold that the efficiency vested in it is Divine. Hence our seer speaks of being held “interiorly and inmost in reflection” on the truths which were successively disclosed to him. He had “an interior or inmost persuasion that the matter was thus and so.” The disclosure which

came to him was not verbal, but was a perception which enabled him to select words which were spiritually significant and then unfold their meaning.

All through the period of his illumination our seer gave himself to this dictate, in place of his former method of external observation and inference. Gaining this clue to the entire Word, he passed out of his experimental stage with the surety of a master. He responded with great humility and willingness to be led, but with no less striking confidence in the realities of his inner personal experience, an assurance which might easily be misunderstood by those who do not discern the principle. Our seer seems to be such a privileged character while following his dictate in the study of the Scriptures that one might regard him as unbalanced. This would be to neglect his constant appeal to the reader to test these teachings. A similar assurance has been expressed by many who believed they had a great mission. The unusual emphasis is required in order to get his work done and put it before the world so as to stir mankind. The wonder in the seer's case is that he could go on with his governmental work, in every respect like any other public servant, and yet be carrying forward an interior development which tended to sunder him from the world. Here was remarkable evidence of sanity. The careful reader will also note, side by side with the evidences of the dictate, that there are signs of the personal equation, notably in case of the repetitions which must seem wearisome in the extreme to those who have an excellent memory.³³⁵ We have in fact the scholar's love for prolix and endless detail combined with the seer's insight, in the desire to disclose what is verifiable by all who were willing to make the needed effort.

Our seer did not adopt the method of citing a few passages out of their context to prove a point, as most of us read the Scriptures. He collated every passage in each instance bearing on the topic in question. So he mastered the Scriptures as a whole according to his dictate.³³⁶ The

result is not merely a way of looking at the Scriptures but a view of the spiritual life which one is expected to verify by far-reaching interpretation. For this dictate enabled him to bring to completion the study of the universal principles which his earlier studies had disclosed. The changes made in his teaching are those which one would naturally make when brought to deeper knowledge by following spiritual truth wherever it might lead.

In a sense his later ideas might be said to have come as results of his prayers when, turning from the outer world to the world within, he undertook to find the true nature of the soul. Hence his dictate would seem to be the fruition of his life-purpose, fulfilling his nature as a seer in accord with his spiritual guidance as a child. But everything turns upon what we take spiritual perception to be, the validity of its deliverances and the relation of these to Divine wisdom as the source of all truth. Our prayers may be intimations of truth and power presently to be bestowed upon us. As spiritual beings we may be inherently reactive or responsive, rather than creative. Granted a Divine activity going forth into the human spirit with intent to convey the truth, man's first part may be said to be to respond to the intimations of this Presence, permitting the spirit of truth to take its own lead and make its disclosures in their order; while his second part is to seek expression for this language of the Spirit in the terms approved of, word by word. The test for those who would verify these deliverances would be to follow this same procedure insofar as Divine truth shall have given spiritual perception. Perception is not intuition as a "faculty," not a "sixth sense," or even the "inward light" in which some religious people have believed. It is produced in us by Divine truth. Direct production of such truth in high degree implies the opening of spiritual sight as the human activity which makes possible the disclosures. The dictate is not carried forward from day to day as a memory, as a precipitate from spiritual processes

which have gone before. It is a part of the living experience to which any item may be referred anew in fresh leadings and recent intimations.

It is significant that our seer hoped to have his *Arcana Coelestia* read by trained men who would investigate and verify for themselves by seeking what he called “the letter of the Word” for inner truth to prepare the way for spiritual perception. This is very different from advising people to seek psychical experiences in relation to the spiritual world. Assured spiritual knowledge must first guide the way. The objective is a Divine science which is to be free from all personal limitations and sectarian interpretations. Consequently, Swedenborg insistently appealed to the reader to use reason to the full in first ascertaining the central truths of the spiritual life. He himself kept the cool dispassionate temper of the man of science. This is why he is for the most part remote or impersonal, at times extremely prosaic, emphasizing particulars which are to be impressed on the mind to form it in the constancy of assured faith. No one can enter sympathetically into the reasons for this austerity, which demands such consecration to the spirit of truth, without seeking above all else to grow in warm and quickening love toward the Lord and man as the greater test. The warmth of the spirit which seems at first to be lacking stirs within us when we realize that we are expected to discern the spiritual life as a whole, not merely to yield to emotion or sentiment.

Swedenborg is admittedly doctrinal. It is easy for the literalist to emulate the manner without the spirit; to read merely what is printed and believe solely on authority. He is, if you take him so, the most positive and insistent of writers, so precise and orderly that some readers have assumed that he never uses the same word in more than one sense, never changes the terms used for his central ideas, never makes a slip, never errs. Hence it would be easy to quote him in such a way as to sustain a highly conservative position. But to read his works with as much

intelligence as we would bring to bear when studying the writings of any scholar of not is to advance in insight into those spiritual truths which prove too great for any literal interpretation.

Our seer follows his leadings by interpreting the introductory chapters of Genesis, not as literal cosmology or history, but as clues to the spiritual life of man. So the entire Word became to him an open Book. So he came to recognize the reasons for such a Word; since man, in his externality, had lost the spiritual perception which would have kept him in direct touch with the Divine sources. If in reconstituted thought we put ourselves back into the stage of first-hand religious experience, we will be able to appreciate how all this came about. For experience was prior to doctrine. Perception was prior to any effort on man's part to systematize and explain the spiritual life. The written doctrine of a later time was a necessity to meet man's needs. No less necessary was the disclosure given to our seer of the inner meaning of the written Word, thus of the true mode of interpreting the letter of the Word without becoming literalists either in reading the Bible or in studying the works of Swedenborg himself.

In his *Arcana Coelestia* Swedenborg first unfolds this psychology of man in his primitive state by giving in each case what he finds to be the real meaning in texts replete with spiritual imagery. He gives much information concerning the "most ancient" and "ancient" times, as he envisages this primitive history. Then at the end of chapters he introduces various subjects pertaining to the spiritual life at large, notably in the spiritual world. Thus he takes up at length the principle that natural states correspond to spiritual, that all real life or causality is by means of influx from the spiritual world into the natural, and that social life in the heavens corresponds to realities less clearly manifested here in the world of natural events and conditions. Naturally, the state of the soul after death is an important subject in all this. So is the relationship between human miseries and spiritual states to which man's troubles correspond. Interspersed in the

textual interpretations all the way along are descriptions of different phases of the life of the human spirit. Thus the psychology is still further developed.

Turning to the *Divine Love and Wisdom*, we find the same psychology in briefer form in relation to man's two cardinal faculties, will and understanding. In the *Divine Providence*, this psychology receives new formulation with respect to two corresponding terms, freedom and rationality. In this work we are more explicitly admitted into the conditions of the human spirit essential to a choice between the types of love which make toward heaven and the world. Here then the ethical principles are made more emphatic. In the *True Christian Religion*, these doctrines receive their final formulation in a study of repentance, faith, and other matters essential to a complete plan of salvation. The prime result is the psychology of regeneration. The psychology of worship, doctrine, works, is secondary to this. For the Divine providence has not only a final purpose in view of man's total life in the natural world and the spiritual, but there is a specific relationship with the needs, conditions, limitations, and opportunities of this life as the sphere of contact with the most external conditions of the natural world. The psychology of regeneration is meant to apply to man as he exists here today. It relates to such external matters as war, for example. Therefore the intent of the seer's method is to drive home the situation of the human spirit so that the reader shall view his own life in the light of this penetrative process.

No writer has more conclusively shown the futility of any plan of salvation which does not turn upon the changed attitude or ruling love of the participant. The whole emphasis is directed to the individual at first. You personally have an account that must be brought up to date. You personally have a vital relation to heaven, that is, to the Divine influx. Your existence is a question of spiritual life, the degree in which you receive it, the way you manifest it, the hindrances in mind and body. Unless you look to yourself, know yourself in your true estate,

with the Lord's help, you in vain depend upon a creed. Few people like to be taught that they must come unequivocally to judgment: seeing their life as it is, realizing that according to the scale of series and degrees there are states of openness to Divine influx which they have not attained. Yet in the *Divine Love and Wisdom* this, the universal test for mankind is relentlessly given.

In other words, it is essential to the method in disclosing the reality and nature of the soul to maintain the closest relation between the psychology and the ethics, the ethics and the religion of the soul's life-history. If we sunder the desire to know from the effort to be and to do, from the prompting to love, the result will be an imperfect view of the soul. The present doctrine is the science of the soul in its entirety. For the purposes of detailed knowledge we may indeed regard the soul now as will and understanding, as freedom and rationality; again, as spirit and mind, with distinctions between what is internal and what external, interior and exterior, inmost and outmost. But the real man is the whole self-viewed in relation to the Divine image and likeness in the eternal order of the universe.

Swedenborg's life to the last day was a remarkable demonstration of his teaching that man lives in two worlds, and his life is always to be borne in mind in studying his method. He not only continued to serve his country in the House of Nobles but traveled abroad to secure the publication of his theological works, and made new acquaintances while carrying on his exceptional life. In a few instances he gave evidences to people that he possessed power to see into events and describe happenings at a distance. His statements in these connections are testified to by a number of trustworthy individuals.³³⁷ But for the most part his inner life was concealed, even from the good people who cared for his house, save so far as his work began to

make his teachings known. A few readers recognized his remarkable insight before his death, in London, in 1772.

It might be said that his method proves Swedenborg to be primarily a theologian. His doctrine of the Lord is the central teaching of all his works and his psychology is derived from his theology. He so reveres those portions of the Bible which are written in correspondences that every syllable of the Word is sacred to him. The secret of his consecration to his work lies in the power of this great idea. He takes up the subjects discussed by theologians and is most positive in his insistence on the need for regeneration. The doctrines indicate a straight and narrow way for the faithful. No one who reads him thoroughly can overlook this strong emphasis on doctrine.

Yet as a giver of theological doctrines Swedenborg is unlike those who formulate the meaning of a given creed or the teachings of a sect in terms of a system. It was his penetrating interest as a man of science to know the final realities of life which led him to push through to the end till he possessed teachings which covered the whole sphere of human experience reaching on into the spiritual world. The struggles from his scientific period into the stage of his illumination indicate a genuine inner birth to be understood by appeal to the universal law of regeneration, not as the verification of a creed. The period of his illumination fulfilled the stage that went before by disclosing many of the same principles in other connections. Consequently these principles may be singled out and compared with the teachings of others as scientific systems are compared. He undertook to carry reason further than it had ever been carried before in the study of the topics included in theology. Hence his doctrines are in contrast with those of writers who propound a system of dogmas to be taken on faith.

“It is evident,” says Mr. Giles, “that the man who gets the most central position, who takes the widest survey, who can see the universal in the particular, who can reconcile apparent contradictions, show how and why the appearance differs from the genuine truth, and from the most varied and complex phenomena obtain a consenting and uniform verdict—it is evident that such a man is a true theologian, and will give us the fullest, clearest, and truest doctrine of the existence, nature, and attributes of God, and His relations to man. This is the criterion by which we propose to judge Swedenborg as a theologian.

By virtue of his conscious intromission into the spiritual world, and his familiarity with the laws of the spiritual life for many years, he gained a more central position than has ever been obtained by any other theologian. He saw the Lord’s methods of creating and governing, and carrying His purposes into effect on the spiritual plane of creation, where spiritual substances and spiritual forces act in freedom, untrammelled by time and space, and the dead weight of matter. He was elevated into the region of causes and general laws, from which he could see effects, and the relation between them and their causes. He was so constituted that he could see both sides; both the spiritual cause and the natural effect. He could see how the spiritual action appeared when clothed in material garments. This gave him the means of understanding the Word of God in which He has revealed Himself to man.³³⁸

His method follows from both his experiences and his central insight, and is not intelligible apart from its fruits in spiritual doctrine, from which the psychology results as a rational consequence. In the development of his method he does not then content himself with

general statements, but introduces the minutest particulars so as to show how the particulars follow from the general principles. Thus the general principle or universal that “God is love” implies the teaching that love is not merely an emotion but an essence in the Divine nature in union with wisdom, and the most direct clue to the essence of the soul. From the relation of love to wisdom in the Divine heart and mind follows the essential relationships of the human soul, and so on to the whole order of creation by a chain of causes in which there is no break. Hence the method of investigation, the principle of the psychology and the theology are one.

Chapter 50

A Theory of Seership

The objections to Swedenborg's doctrines are usually adverse criticisms of the seer himself by critics who have paid little attention to his teachings in their entirety. The implication is that if Swedenborg was of such and such a type what he taught was inconsequential. If a mystic, adversely speaking, his symbolisms were purely subjective, hence misleading. If a spirit-seer, his spiritual world with its inhabitants was the creation of a disordered brain. As both mystic and spirit-seer he was demented. Apparently, his so-called "trance-revelations" can be explained on the hypothesis of a larger conception of the human self, such as the view made by F.W. H. Myers concerning the "subliminal self" with its wide points of contact. Emerson regarded Swedenborg as the typical mystic, deploring the fact that he did not develop the science of correspondence as Emerson believed possible.³³⁹

We shall consider these and other criticisms only so far as necessary to determine Swedenborg's type more decisively, and to outline a theory of seership so far as the psychology calls for it. Some of the criticisms are self-refuting. We have noted the fact, for example, that Swedenborg carried on his public duties in a perfectly rational manner while also pursuing his study of the Scriptures by a gradually acquired method. We have noted the acute physiological description of the organism, the fine analyses of the mental elements in their relation, and the systematic coordination of these elements with ethical and religious principles. We need not then examine the assumption that our seer was insane. Our study of dreams, visions and spirits

showed that these are always subordinate phenomena. Thus, to complete his account of the way the Word was given to men, angels and spirits are introduced as instrumental only. Swedenborg expressly warns his readers not to cultivate any phase of the explorations which for him were essential because of a specific purpose. The value of such matters for us is that a study of what they meant to Swedenborg helps us to grasp his psychology as applicable to the present life. The sole interests of the present part of our analysis are: the discovery of the seer's type as essential to knowledge of his psychology, and the applicability of this doctrine in the explanation of such matters as mystical experience with a view to discovering what is universal. Hence we shall examine certain phases only of the objections to Swedenborg as a teacher.

Emerson classed Swedenborg as a mystic before mysticism was analyzed psychologically. This judgment has passed current among many who have scarcely read our seer's works. Such an estimate is as facile as the identification of a man's views with radicalism if we do not like him. Postponing the question of mysticism for the moment, it will clarify our inquiry if we examine Emerson's estimate on other grounds.

Swedenborg does not appear to have been representative of any of the types which came under Emerson's view. Our seer is said to have admitted the "perilous opinion" concerning himself that he was an "abnormal" person to whom was granted the privilege of conversing with spirits and angels. But the seer takes the Bible more seriously than some, reads the entire book, and concerns himself with matters which are, for the Bible, almost commonplace. Granted the seer's doctrine, all powers in man enabling a person to discern the spiritual world or converse with its inhabitants are *normal*, though quiescent. Hence we may judge the seer's deliverances by their inherent truth on the ground that any unusual utterance is due to faculties not yet

understood. Our seer enjoyed a normal development of spiritual perception and endeavored to discount everything detrimental in psychical experiences of a spiritistic type.

To call his experiences an “ecstasy” is to overlook the fact that if ever there was a non-emotional observer it was Swedenborg, with his persistent endeavor to be moderate and to explain where others had been content with mystical confusion. Emerson admits this proneness for explanations in other connection, when he says our seer was “superfluously explanatory, and his feeling of the ignorance of men strangely exaggerated.” What seems to Emerson as “immense and sandy diffuseness” is meant to be complete demonstration. It does not follow that our seer “paid the penalty of introverted faculties” by early falling into “discord” with himself as if “jealous of his intellect.” For it is precisely by taking intellect in utter seriousness that Swedenborg sought to rationalize what had been mystical.

What Emerson calls a “theological bias” fatally narrowing our seer’s interpretation of nature—so that “grave deductions must be made in the theological works”—is also to be differently understood when we see why the sometime student of nature dedicated himself to scriptural interpretation. To Emerson, the theological style seems to imply an excessive determination to form, but also a radical disregard for excellent intellectual form. For, says Emerson, “Swedenborg saw, not abstractly, but in pictures, heard it in dialogues.”

This is an inversion of method. Swedenborg is uncommonly abstract. He leaves the reader to supply the imagery and the evidences. He discourses impersonally, even about the Lord. Insofar as he appealed to thought-pictures it was with the implication that the imagery of correspondences stands for a precise law. One who chooses may set aside the imagery and still find that the law remains. The memorable relations in which the doctrines are put in dialogue

form as reputed conversations with spirits are incidental to the system, secondary in value and method; to discount them would be to find that the structural ideas remain, to be dealt with as one might estimate any doctrinal system.

It does not follow that the seer's higher science is "defeated" by this exclusive "theological direction" which his inquiries took. To expect him to forget his "bias" is to ask him not to be Swedenborg in a doctrinal age. He has one all-absorbing idea to which he holds with great tenacity of purpose. His inquiries had the exclusiveness of one who proposed to be convincingly thorough. If the result impressed Emerson as a "mystical" and "quite arbitrary and accidental picture of the truth," this was because Emerson did not care to plod through the long argument to test it as a type.

Emerson finds no real "individual" in the seer's doctrine. He finds determinism instead of freedom. In place of the sort of individual he looked for, he finds an "immense chain of intermediation extending from extremes to extremes," which bereaves every agency of all freedom and character. The prime result is that all of our seer's human types mean the same few things, all his figures utter the same speech, and "all his interlocutors Swedenborgize." Consequently, both the heavens and the hells are dull, and even the angels are "country parsons." This is the reaction of a poet who misses much that is germane to the system, notably the doctrine of knowledge, the idea of freedom and responsibility, the significance of the Divine order, and the allocation of individuals by types and functions in the Grand Man.

It is to be expected that the spirits who discourse on the doctrines would use the seer's language. This is called for by the psychology of memory-knowledge. Every writer who

introduces conversations into his account of the spiritual world draws on his own convictions. For every writer has a point of view, his mind is of a certain type, he writes in a certain age.

So, too, when Swedenborg discourses about great men of the past he would naturally be guided by his judgment concerning their worth. The chief instance is what he says about Aristotle, whom he classes under “naturalism” because his conclusions concerning philosophy led him to do so. We find our seer discounting all Quakers in the spiritual world because they are “enthusiastic spirits” mistaking themselves for the Holy Spirit, a terrible falsity in Swedenborg’s eyes. Such statements refer of course to Quakers as thus classified in the past, not to such Friends as we meet in the world today. Granted the doctrine of the two memories, one would be cautious about attributing to an historical character of the remote past precisely what that great man believed through memory-knowledge while here. Thus our seer hesitates to say he actually conversed with Cicero.³⁴⁰ But he never hesitates when expounding what he regards as revealed doctrine.

Not a lover of system, Emerson fell down in his estimate of Plato, and wrote about Swedenborg in the light of available material. He did not first define mysticism, and then study the great types. When he holds that Swedenborg’s revelations “destroy their credit by running into detail,” his is the reaction of one who cared little for the painstaking analyses which with Swedenborg began long before the period of his illumination. Any demonstration must run into detail, at times wearisome. Any system means one-sided which is restricted to a central interest, such as the doctrine of the Lord. Thus technical works are proverbially tiresome. We prefer to be entertained and to have the gist of a thing put before us in an attractive way. The truth about life often seems rather unyielding. But meanwhile the venture which our seer made was to extend science into the spiritual world. What Emerson delightfully touches on in his *Essays* titled

“Compensation” and “Spiritual Laws,” our seer develops in the form of systematic principles in his theological works. Where the “Over-soul” is poetic, Swedenborg’s doctrine of the Lord is severely prosaic. It is not a question of mystical blending as if there were no “bar or wall” where man as “effect” ceases and God as “cause” begins. Man is far more than an “effect.” He is a highly organized spiritual being, to be clearly envisaged before we can trust ourselves to the poetic symbolism of Emerson’s “Over-soul.” Hence Emerson’s estimate is to be taken throughout as a type of response.

The stress put by Emerson on what he regards as the personality and bias of Swedenborg leads us to raise the whole question of individual differences. We have noted the general principle that all influx depends on the character and structure of the receptacle. No two individuals are precisely alike. The modifications due to personality will always enter into the account. We have also seen that in the receiving of revelations there are several modes, varying from that of direct perception or open vision, prior to the production of our Bible, to the incoming of a dictate, the conditions due to a dream, a vision by night or day, the type of report made by the evangelists, and the communications of the Apocalypse. Doubtless the temperament of a prophet would have some effect on his message. The same would be true of the evangelists, and we may apply the same reasoning with greater force to the parts of the Bible not included in the Word, and to the teachings of the apostles at large.

The teaching in this connection is this: After the apostles had received from the Lord the gift of the Holy Spirit they promulgated the gospel by speech and by writing. This they did *of themselves* “from the Lord.”³⁴¹

For Peter taught and wrote in one manner, James in another, and Paul in another, each according to his own intelligence. The Lord filled them all with His Spirit; but the measure in which each partook of it was in accordance with the character of his perceptions; and this was made use of in accordance with the character of his ability. The Lord fills all the angels in the heavens, for they are in the Lord and the Lord is in them; and yet each one speaks and acts in accordance with the state of his own mind, some with simplicity and some with wisdom, thus from infinite variety; nevertheless everyone speaks ‘from the Lord.’

So, too, every minister of the Church, whether he give forth truths or falsities, utters his message by means of his own intelligence; each speaks from his own mind, according to the spirit he possesses. Thus, too, Protestants speak by appeal to the dogmas taught by Luther, Calvin, or Melanchthon: their followers speak of themselves from the leaders or dogmas. Again, each dogma may be explained in a hundred ways.^{††}

Pressing the matter to its analysis, we would need to distinguish between detrimental and favorable conditions in human personality. There are natural differences which may be explained by structure and type. As the same solar energy enters both thorn and vine but is differently received by each, so the same light flows into the limestone and into the diamond, but the former quenches the light, while the latter transmits it.³⁴² We may compare those whose states are an interference with the limestone. “In human minds these differences are in accordance with the forms of the mind, which become inwardly spiritual in accordance with faith in God, and on the

^{††} Dresser is referring to Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), a German scholar and theologian of the early Reformation. He was the principal author of the *Augsburg Confession* of 1530.

contrary, made dark and bestial by a faith in more than one God, which differs but little from no faith in God.”

Among detrimental factors evil would of course be classed as the worst deterrent. Heredity is a vitiating factor. Externality is so great a hindrance that it may involve the closing of man’s interiors. Disease also makes an emphatic difference in man’s life and consciousness. Two streams of influence unite in man and much depends on his manner of responding to each *in freedom*. The evil derived from parents, classed as hereditary evil, “acts in and into man.” So the Divine goodness acts in and into man. The good acts above or within, the evil acts below or without. If the evil acted through man *unqualifiedly* he would neither be culpable nor capable of reformation. Or if the good from the Lord simply acted through man he would be incapable of reformation. It is because both good and evil depend on man’s free choice that he is declared guilty when he acts of himself from evil, and is blameless when he acts of himself from good. The distinction within man is this: the internal principle acts in and into the external, but not through it. The internal mediates a thousand things. From these the external mind chooses only such as are suited to its use. In the internal mind there is a vast collection of ideas.

Among conditions in the internal mind would be classed such states as innocence and obedience. Spiritual perception is the highest type, psychologically speaking. But we should also allow for the fact that, as each person is spiritually equipped for a function in the Grand Man, those conditions in both spirit and mind are favorable which enable a man to fulfill this Divine purpose.

Whether or not nervous and bodily conditions are favorable would be a matter to inquire into in the case of each individual. That is it is a question of the use made of the organism as an

instrument. A person so sensitively organized that physicians, unaware of his inner life, might class him as “neurotic,” might also be so impressionable as to be responsive in high degree to Divine influx. In accordance with our psychology everybody is to be judged from above, not from below.

This accords with distinctions drawn in the psychology of religion since the days of the epoch-making work of William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Formerly what James called medical materialism prevailed. Thus Maudsley, in his *Mind and Body*, and again in *The Pathology of Mind*, disparaged Swedenborg, for example, as typically abnormal on the ground that Swedenborg’s change into seership was coincident with what was evidently an acute attack of mania such that the seer’s later years marked “the morbid evolution of his self-sufficient character.”³⁴³

James points out that Paul on the road to Damascus may have had an epileptic seizure, George Fox may have been a hereditary degenerate, Saint Teresa an hysteric, and so on through a long list of people classed as mystics, each one being disparaged on materialistic grounds. But James points out that we do not undertake to refute opinions in the fields of natural science and the industrial arts on the ground that their authors had a neurotic disposition; and he cites the fact that even Maudsley came to the conclusion that it is not a question of the mind’s conditions but of the work achieved. Or, as James puts it, it is not a question of *origins* but of “values” and “ends,” of the way the mind works on the whole. The roots of a man’s virtue might be inaccessible to us. But we would still have the products or fruits of his toil. Indeed, James goes far as to say that the neurotic temperament might furnish the chief condition of receptivity essential to a revelation. This would mean that the doctrine should be tested by itself, that temperament is not necessarily an obstacle.

No better illustration of mental states which were for the time being confusing could be found than the strange experiences recorded by Swedenborg in his *Dream-Book*, wherein self-accusations and watchfulness over self are mingled with scrupulous care and exactitude in recording fantastic and suggestive dreams. Hyde, whose analysis of this book is most penetrative, notes that while the book depicts a strange state of mind in which the spiritual senses were becoming opened, so that there was on occasion perception of spiritual beings and things in the spiritual world, there were also statements which have given ground for the sweeping charge of “madness” brought against the seer by his detractors.³⁴⁴

If Swedenborg had long continued in the condition indicated by his *Dream-Book*, or if he had never risen out of it, as out of a crude and initiatory condition, it might have been very difficult to refute the charge of mental aberration. But in his mind the prolific doctrines of ‘correspondence’ and ‘degrees’ lay weltering, molding themselves gradually into definite form; at the same time, in his spiritual experience, anguish as to sin, earnest prayers for deliverance, the consciousness of direful temptations, with occasional gleamings out of a sense of spiritual freedom, welcomed with great joy, and recorded in exclamations, were mingling together. . . . The first marvel is not so much that he should have had to pass through such a state, but that he should have deemed it his duty so faithfully to chronicle its experiences. The fearless candor of the record must even more impress the reader than its singular statements. . . . The real wonder is not that he should ever have entered into such spiritual conditions, but that he should have been able to pass through this partial, disordered, and unreliable state, into that of self-mastery and clear perception, which, without a break, characterizes his subsequent writings.

The turning-point was the opening of the sense of the spiritual body, the eyes of the spirit, so that spiritual *sight* clarified the way as an established mode of inner experience. Hence, instead of the customary explanation, namely, that angels and spirits have the power to render themselves visible to the natural sight of those who behold them, because of their “temporary assumption of a material envelop, or covering . . . dissipated as soon as the purpose for which it was assumed was accomplished,” the explanation is that the illumined spirit *looks into the spiritual world*. This coincides with the teaching of the Bible, for example when it is said that “Balaam the son of Boer hath said, and the man whose eyes were open hath said: He hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty falling, but having his eyes open.”³⁴⁵ Seers in the scriptural sense were habitually those whose eyes were thus open, as in the case of the young man who saw Elisha.³⁴⁶ Swedenborg claims for himself precisely this opening of his spiritual sight as the condition which makes possible the actual discernment of what is real in the spiritual world, hence what is real in man’s experience of that world. This state of openness of interior vision continued with rare intervals during twenty-seven years. But the term “seer” is to be used with discrimination. All prophets are not seers. A man could be gifted with seership without being inspired. Seership is not dependent on moral character, nor is it the reward of holiness. If once the normal condition of all men in the primitive celestial state, it came later to men under special conditions; and is to be understood in Swedenborg’s case with reference to this particular work as an enlightened scholar, working by aid of a dictate.³⁴⁷

Commenting on the hypothesis that Swedenborg was demented, Spalding remarks,

“It is clear that if Swedenborg did not come into contact with a real world external to himself and with real people there, and yet had the firmest conviction that he did, he must have been the victim of delusions as sustained and consistent as to constitute a

psychological marvel of the first magnitude. This is not a case of occasional apparitions, but of a consistent dual life during more than a quarter of a century. Nor was the observer a hysterical or excitable person, but a singularly composed, sedate thinker and investigator of mature years, who carried his habits of careful and methodical research into this strange and unforeseen sphere of labor. The theory of delusion requires us to believe that hallucination of the most convincing and consistent kind can exist continuously during twenty-eight years in a mind to all appearance calm, logical and systematic. But that is only a part of the problem.

When a man's imagination takes the bit in its teeth and persuades him that its fashioning are objective realities, it may be expected to lead him a pretty dance. Having absolutely nothing to check it, where need it stop? Can unbridled fancy be content to tread the same round, to make the same report as to essential facts for twenty-eight years? In Swedenborg's experience it may be said there is no trace whatever of inconsistency or variation. Development there was in his insight into and appreciation of his experiences, but as to the facts themselves, his statements from first to last are identical.³⁴⁸

What we are directly concerned with is the manner of producing the works on which the psychology is based. Swedenborg is to be described as illumined rather than inspired, if by inspiration we mean dictation by the mechanical method. Our seer did not claim that the words he wrote were dictated, but that the principles of his works were disclosed to him *while he was reading the Word*. He did claim indeed that what came to him was from "the Lord alone," not

from any angel; and that what was disclosed was “the most excellent of all revelations, even from the creation of the world.”³⁴⁹ It was entirely in accord with his theory of knowledge to make this claim that his truth was from the Lord alone; for God as the source and basis of all truth is to be distinguished from all intermediaries, even from the written Word as a visible Book.

Swedenborg is classed therefore by his followers as “a rational instrument under Divine illumination,” namely *a rationally convinced thinker and writer*. What came to him while reading the Word was the disclosure of the spiritual sense of the Word, that is, *insight into principles*. This insight had both an empirical source and an intellectual origin. The empirical source was that already indicated, through the opening of his spiritual senses so that he *saw* and *heard*, and thereupon described in minute detail what he had seen and heard: he experienced the realities of the spiritual world and also understood their meaning. The intellectual sources included both the prime results of his scientific period, including the doctrine of series, degrees, influx, and correspondences, and the dictate of the period of his illumination.

Chapter 51

The Test of Seership

Our theory of seership is that the seer should be judged by his type, by making full allowance for the personal equation. Any estimate falls short which assigns so much importance to human limitations that it neglects the values realized despite these conditions. On the principle that the spiritual world is near at hand, and is distinguishable by appeal to an adequate psychology of the spiritual life as a whole, it is in every sense “normal” to possess insight into that world. The seer should therefore be classed by reference to the purpose actuating his work, the end attained, and the principles promulgated. If he passed through a profound inner change like that of Paul on the road to Damascus, this regeneration becomes intelligible from within, and his utterances should be tested by appeal to universal principles which have withstood the application of reason as the criterion. It is especially important to possess an adequate psychology of mysticism. We may then test each claim by itself. The seer has a right to a full hearing in his behalf.

Swedenborg did not, for example, claim that his works were written by correspondences. There was no longer any need for such writings, since the time had come for rational understanding of the spiritual sense of the Word. What he did do was to appeal to the universal meaning behind all particular statements, in behalf of his psychology of spiritual perception and the inner dictate, and the teaching that we have power to lift the understanding into spiritual light.

Granted a proposition like “Love is the life of man,” we may put this to the test in relation with other propositions such as, sustentation is perpetual creation, influx is determined

by efflux, and the first of a series determines the nature of a series, creation proceeds from first principles to ultimates. Given these and many other propositions by which our seer's doctrine as a whole may be summarized, we have a system integrated according to a cardinal principle. This principle is theological. Hence it lies outside of the present inquiry to test its validity in comparison with other systems as a whole. But granted the proper setting, we have a psychological clue which we can follow to the end.

We understand then why our seer appealed to the reader to use reason in fullest measure in the quest for Divine truths embodied in the sacred text. For the seer's works set forth principles of interpretation to be used as instruments in extension of the same method which Swedenborg employed in the analysis of certain books in the Bible. The seer did not wish to be followed blindly. He did not expect his works to be taken literally, but to be read with intelligence. He indicated the laws implied in the establishment of a church, showed why a church comes to an end, to be succeeded by another; and why there must be a New Church which will be established according to the principles of the inner sense of the Word. All principles are meant to be of universal application, not only the principles of correspondence and degrees; but those implied in the processes of reformation and regeneration, in all stages of the soul's progress toward spiritual freedom. The reader is not addressed as a mere receiver of doctrines: he should prove or verify, see these principles in the light of the spiritual facts they explain, the wisdom they disclose, and the practical values to which they lead.

There is constant appeal to the reader to grasp the implied principles, to observe the facts which these principles interpret, and thus to understand that the principles are proved or established beyond doubt. Hence the recurrence of such statements as these: "In confirmation of this I shall . . . adduce passages from the Word;"³⁵⁰ "examine the passages where [this] . . .

occurs and you will see;”³⁵¹ “investigate the matter from rational light, and you will find that in man are. . . .”³⁵² Sometimes the appeal is to human knowledge in general: “Who does not perceive and acknowledge from this reason that there is an only Essence from which is all essence,”³⁵³ or “everyone can perceive and acknowledge from his reason that it is true.” Again, the appeal is to a higher principle: “Those have spiritual light who . . . love to understand what is true; while those have natural light who . . . love to confirm what has been said by another.”³⁵⁴ It is also necessary at times to refer to considerations of lower rank: “But as this is contrary to appearance, it may not seem to merit belief unless it be proved; and since it can be proved only by such things as man can apprehend by his bodily senses, by these it shall be proved.”³⁵⁵ Furthermore, many statements are made in certain connections only, and to know the full truth it is necessary to put these incomplete propositions with other statements made elsewhere. Indeed, some descriptions concerning the inner life, the nature of human personality and the characteristics of evil would leave the reader utterly confused unless these passages were offset by statements in other works in which the point of approach is different, for example the description of the seat or localization of the mind in the brain, as if the mind were identical with the cortical substances.³⁵⁶ Plainly it is expected that the reader will use his intelligence to the full in order to understand before he interprets, to use reason as a guide to insight, and to seek integrated insight above isolated judgments.

The prime result is the possession of a system of principles disclosing not merely the spiritual sense of the Word but the spiritual sense of life. This system is plainly superior in value to the literal sense of a dictated text. So indeed the reader’s experience in discerning, applying, verifying the system is superior as a process to the controlled experiences of those who in ancient times served as scribes in recording the text. Any process of enlightened reason is superior to

mediumship. But in process, we have repeatedly noted, is not decisive. It is not necessary to know what is disclosed by means of it, what the Divine purpose is. We have examined this process only so far as necessary in order to understand the differences between the giving of the Word by means of various instruments; the disclosure of the spiritual meaning of the Word through the experiences, investigations, the dictate, and the writings of Swedenborg, who regarded himself as the “servant of the Lord;” and the understanding and rational use of Swedenborg’s writings by those who seek the systematic meaning of these works. For, plainly, very much will depend on the reader’s understanding of the seer’s psychology as key to Swedenborg’s peculiar states and privileges.

Some followers have classed his works as a “revelation” without first considering the psychology of the giving of revelations. The result is acceptance of doctrines on authority without the use of reason, to the neglect of the principles and the psychology of human limitations. The seer is thus put into a strange position. So the question is, not what is true in the spiritual universe, but what does our “revelator” say? Because he, as specially chosen, has said it, therefore it is true. This appeal to authority is apt to mean acceptance of less important teachings, taken as they read, to the neglect of doctrines which supplement or modify these. It would be the irony of fate to read and accept an author in this way who, above nearly all writers on spiritual subjects, has insisted on the depth and interior character of spiritual truth; who is explicitly psychological in calling attention to misleading interpretations of the letter of the Bible, who constantly appeals to enlightened intelligence, also to life or conduct as direct means of verification.

It is Divine truth wherever found that yields the standard; not any book as such, not even the language of the Word itself. The highest claim we can make for any work other than the

Word is that it also contains Divine truths which are inherently consistent, one with the truths of the Word, all Divine truth being one. This truth as universal is inwrought in the spiritual universe itself. It is written in the celestial selfhood of man. It is the universal truth that is “infallible” or “inerrant,” or highest in degree. The various gradations of approach to or understanding of this truth become intelligible to us through the degree of our insight into the spiritual nature of man. So we are eventually able to grasp the idea of the nature and function of celestial perception although we are still far from possessing it. We attribute a much lower function to the text of Scripture taken as it reads, while realizing that, granted principles made known by perceptual insight, it is a means of uniting us with the Divine. So, too, we learn to discriminate from first to last between the content of revelation and the experiences through which it was given, assigning to the experiences the values which each rightfully possesses on its own plane.

A distinction between content and experience is also necessary in order to appreciate in what sense Swedenborg’s works embody a revelation. To examine the structural ideas of these works, notably the doctrine of degrees, correspondence, and influx, is to find that they are the same as those of his psychology during his later scientific period. Consequently, it is not claimed that these principles came to Swedenborg after his spiritual eyes were open, despite the fact that logically the whole plan of his spiritual doctrines rests on these important principles. We therefore appeal to the view advocated by the translator of *The Soul, or Rational Psychology*, who says, “It is not the knowledge of correspondence that is revealed or supernaturally discovered, but the *knowledge of the things that correspond*.”³⁵⁷ That is, the knowledge of correspondence may be compared to knowledge of the principles of arithmetic, algebra, or logic, as products of human reasoning power, the principle of correspondence being equivalent to the *logic of the universe*. What was needed was experimental knowledge to apply this principle on

the spiritual as well as on the physical plane. The requisite spiritual experience was granted to Swedenborg as “the true, the loftiest, and the final field for the application of those great sciences.” Hence the distinction between the doctrine of correspondence as a method, and the substantial knowledge to which the doctrine is applied.

The specific claim therefore is that by this experience “the nature of the soul was substantially learned in the spiritual world, but never by Swedenborg in this natural world, or by the deductions of reason alone.” In his scientific period Swedenborg had failed to attain any satisfactory knowledge of the essence of the soul itself. What he advanced by way of theory was merely his conjectures and guesses. The substance of the soul still remained a secret. But after his experiences in the spiritual world he wrote from the point of view of actual knowledge.

The content of the theological works, distinguished as a revelation, is that portion of the seer’s writings in which he sets forth doctrines received, “not from any angel, but from the Lord alone.” The doctrinal content is to be distinguished from the knowledge which the author imparts in narrating his own experiences, namely, of things “heard and seen.” It is not claimed that the latter are a revelation. Even in the spiritual world what is revealed remains distinct from what is seen and heard. In the case of the greatest seers, personal experiences, although they may seem to embody a supernatural or miraculous kind of knowledge, “consist of things wholly within the scope of human observation and discovery, although of an extraordinary kind.”³⁵⁸

To understand Swedenborg’s experiences as thus explanatory and confirmatory, yielding knowledge of the soul essential to receiving his revelation, we naturally turn to his own record of these experiences, described with the greatest care and minuteness of detail. For there we find him telling when experiences of various types began, how long they lasted, and when they gave

place to others; how many years he has enjoyed contact with angels and spirits, with precise dates; when the doctrine of the Lord became his central truth, and why he eliminated communications which are not explicitly of “the Lord alone.” It would require another volume to investigate this record in detail, but we may summarize a few significant facts.

We find Swedenborg referring, for example, to things *told* him, things *seen*, and “living words heard,” as results of his intromission into the spiritual world “while awake,” and “sensibly experiencing the government of his mind by spirits.”³⁵⁹ Later, he mentioned “whole pages” written, not by dictation of the words, but by spirits who “led” his hand and thus “wrote themselves.” Again, he experiences five kinds of apparitions, shown him that he may know them; and he is made aware of the influx of spirits that he may understand the effects produced on his mind by this means. After a time, in this experimental period, communications which had been orally dictated were obliterated; and, learning the meaning of significatives and what they lead to, Swedenborg began to see clearly that the Divine providence had ruled his acts since adolescence so that he could understand spiritual truth by natural things, and might serve as an instrument in opening the Word. He saw too from his own experience that “never can human philosophy enter the things which are spiritual and celestial; but spiritual and celestial things must introduce natural ones.”³⁶⁰ This is his conclusion after a year of experiences in relation to the spiritual world. He learns also that God Messiah alone speaks; while angels, spirits, or men are instrumental causes only.

After two years, it became possible to deliver “arcane of heaven.”³⁶¹ He has thus far enjoyed inmost sight but “obscurely.” He is also able to distinguish the influx of angels from that of evil spirits. Writing what appears to be divinely inspired, his hand is “directed into the very words by a higher force.” Sometimes he knew by what angel the communication came. Again,

he mentions a message which was “dictated, but in a wonderful way in the thought, and the thought was led to the understanding of these words.”³⁶² He now begins to understand the types of revelation. Sometimes this is by writing, but with power such that “if one wants to write something else, it cannot possibly be done.” But what he wrote when thus controlled was destroyed “because God Messiah was unwilling that it should be effected in this way. Nor has it been permitted that anything should be dictated *viva voce*.”³⁶³

Turning from this elementary record to the *Spiritual Diary*, we find Swedenborg referring to a number of years during which he experienced heavenly delights.³⁶⁴ He is now having such experiences as a “living vision” during a waking period at night, being told something from heaven by a living voice, beholding a vision by day; and also awareness of the fact that he is “endowed with a double thought, one more interior, and the other exterior.”³⁶⁵ Our seer now changes his terminology, January 24, 1748, from “God Messiah” to the Lord, and from this time forward without exception he uses the latter term, which thus stands for the period of his mastership of spiritual principles.

His experiences now become specific, and he find his mind kept in a state of general vision which almost “abstracted” him at times from particular ideas. He also sees corporeal things as though below the viewpoint of his vision. He sees many of his friends and acquaintances in the other life, and converses with them. When in converse he is as it were separated from the body, and after nearly three years in which his mind has been withdrawn for the most part from corporeal things he is able to speak more confidently concerning what he sees. But he once more emphasizes the fact that although he learns about heavenly things in visions and representations, also by speech with angels and spirits, these realities are “solely from the Lord.”³⁶⁶ “Whenever there has been any representation, vision, or speech, I have been

held interiorly and inmostly in reflection upon it, as to what was useful or good in it, thus as to what I might learn. . . . Thus I have been instructed, consequently, by no spirit, or angel, but by the Lord alone from whom is everything true and good.”³⁶⁷

Yet despite the increasing clarity of his spiritual vision, Swedenborg speaks of an indeterminate state in which he could scarcely tell whether he was in the body or out of it. The great lesson of his experience is obedience. “From the manifold and daily experiences of three years it has been granted me to know that a man or spirit is compelled to think and speak that which the Lord permits, or concedes.”³⁶⁸ Although he had been obsessed by spirits, nothing ever injured him. The chief characteristic of his experience is its confirmatory nature, in accord with the principles which he was presently to embody in the *Arcana Coelestia*. In this connection he says: “All things which I have written in this book have been written in no other way than from living experience; from conversation with spirits and angels; from a thought like tacit speech communicated to me while I was writing. . . .”³⁶⁹

Thoroughly instructed by all these experiences concerning the nature of the spiritual world, and assured that he has not thought a whit from himself, he now begins the series of works on which he was engaged until the end of his earthly life. Hence he often begins a topic by saying “in order that I might know” or “in order that I might see,” and then proceeds to expound those principles which were first disclosed to him by experience during his preliminary period, but which now come to him more directly, by the aid of his dictate. “It has been granted me to see,” he remarks in one of these introductory statements, “by internal sight the things of the other life more clearly than I see the things in the world.”³⁷⁰ Although his truths are from the Lord alone, he is still instructed in part by angels and spirits, that he may know how matters seemed to those who lived on earth many centuries before. “I have been instructed by some of the Most

Ancient Church concerning the state of their perception.”³⁷¹ “I was instructed by the angels that this is so.”³⁷² “I have spoken with the angels about these things many times, and have been fully instructed by them in the truth.”³⁷³ His supplementary or confirmatory experiences also continue. “Nor should I have known this,” he adds, “had I not been instructed by living experience.”³⁷⁴ This instruction is needed that he may “know these things with certainty.”³⁷⁵ Again, he speaks with the certitude of the nine years which have elapsed since he was introduced into the spiritual world.³⁷⁶

In *Heaven and Hell*, in which he has gathered the results of experience and instructions pertaining to the spiritual world, Swedenborg once more appeals to his own experience, and explains that he was elevated into the light of the spiritual world interiorly by degrees.³⁷⁷ It now seems probably that he has spoken with more than 100,000 in the spiritual world. He has spoken with spirits as a spirit, and also as a man in the body. In the *Apocalypse Explained*, his retrospect over these inner experiences covers a period of fifteen years; and he says convincingly, “I have clearly perceived that I thought and willed nothing of myself.”³⁷⁸ He is no less emphatic in drawing the same distinction between what he has written in his books as Divine truth, and what he has experienced or learned from conversation, as secondary or supplementary. “What has come from the Lord has been written; and what has come from the angels has not been written. . .”³⁷⁹

In his later work the seer says, more explicitly, “It has been granted me to be in the two worlds by turns, and from the one to explore the other.”³⁸⁰ Still later, he looks back over nineteen years of such experiences:³⁸¹ This statement belongs in the period after the last records of the *Spiritual Diary*. In *Documents* 229, the time is given as twenty-two years.³⁸² In his later works, he still speaks with the same conviction: “It has been granted me to know this by revelation.”³⁸³

Again, he remarks: “that this is so has been revealed to me.”³⁸⁴ The later work here referenced, *Apocalypse Revealed*, signalizes the change in other-world events which have made possible a new interpretation adding to that of the *Apocalypse Explained*. Here, as in other later theological works, the element of personal experience belongs still more remotely in the background. The culminating theological work, *True Christian Religion*, brings this phase of his career to its close, with the implication that its *doctrine* is in every way paramount. While the empirical element has been decreasing, the doctrinal element has been cumulative.

The fact to which we call particular attention is that, beginning with the period of mastery of his mode of interpretation and his doctrine, in the *Arcana*, and continuing through all his theological works, notably in the *True Christian Religion*, which is highly doctrinal, the same psychology has been consistently used. This is not primarily the psychology which Swedenborg might have deduced from the experiences described in the *Spiritual Diary*, where his attitude is still in part tentative, and where suppositions are occasionally recorded. Nor was it originally a deduction from his other-world experiences. For him, spiritual perception, with its attendant dictate, came to occupy the first place, that is, in interpreting the Scriptures; and *from the truths disclosed by this interpretation* came the psychology wherewith to overcome the uncertainties of the *Diary* and rightly to estimate the other-world experience. Thus Swedenborg plainly indicates what for him is primary, and it is a matter of simple justice to judge the output of his twenty-seven years by the principles which guided his life and his thought. His sanity is particularly exemplified in the persistence and consistency wherewith he successively formulated the same principles, unfolding them in their system, applying them in correlated fields, and rigidly subordinating the personal evidences which were significant for him as a pioneer but which no reader or follower was ever advised to recover or repeat.

Swedenborg clearly indicates during these later years what he understands to be the whole meaning of his experiences, namely, when he takes up the question,

“Why, from being a philosopher I have been chosen? The cause has been that the spiritual things now being revealed may be taught and understood naturally and rationally for spiritual truths have a correspondence with natural truths. . . . For this reason I was introduced by the Lord first into the natural sciences, and thus prepared; and in fact from the year 1710 to the year 1744, when heaven was opened to me. . . . The Lord has further granted to me to love truths in a spiritual manner, that is . . . for the sake of the truths themselves; for he who loves truths for the sake of truth, sees them from the Lord.”³⁸⁵

In a letter to the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, he writes:

As the Lord our Savior cannot come into the world in Person, it was necessary that He should do it by means of a man who should not only receive the doctrine of that Church by his understanding, but also publish it by means of the press; and as the Lord had prepared me for this from my childhood, He manifested Himself in Person before me His servant, and sent me to do His work. This took place in the year 1743; and He afterwards opened the sight of my spirit, and thus introduced me into the spiritual world . . . and this continually for twenty-seven years. I declare in truth that this is so. This took place with me on account of the New Church, the doctrine of which is contained in my books.”³⁸⁶

Finally, Swedenborg explains that his works are not miracles. “These revelations are not miracles, because every man is as to his spirit in the spiritual world without any separation from his body in the natural world; but I with some separation; but only as to the intellectual part of my mind, and not as to the voluntary part.”³⁸⁷ Again, he explicitly says: “The things which are related are not miracles, but testimonies that I have been introduced by the Lord into the spiritual world.”³⁸⁸ “The manifestation of the Lord in Person, and introduction into the spiritual world by the Lord, as well to the sight as to the hearing and speech, is better than all miracles; for we do not read anywhere in history that such intercourse with angels has been granted to anyone since the creation of the world. I am daily with angels there, as in the world with men, and this for twenty-seven years.”³⁸⁹

We understand then that all during these years our seer retained control of his will, and of his body, although partly separated from the body at times; hence that his revelations came through interior illumination of the understanding, which he obediently and constantly dedicated to this work. These revelations consisted, in essence, of Divine truths systematically unfolded for the exposition of the spiritual sense of the Word, and the clarification of the entire pathway of the human spirit from conception to death, with knowledge of all influences to which the spirit is subject both in the natural world and in the spiritual. All this detail was needed to make a complete demonstration. The years of master-experiences were also essential, in addition to the preparatory years of his youth, and the strange intervening period of dreams and confused spiritual states. These confirmatory experiences were not consciously sought. They came as gifts. In the record in which they are preserved we possess the same system, implying the same psychology as that of the doctrines themselves.

Swedenborg as a writer admittedly adapts his teaching to his age by reference to the doctrines then current, also the falsities. He made use of the scholarly works on biblical subjects then existing, by reference to what was then known concerning biblical manuscripts (before the days of accurate knowledge of such matters), also by appeal to the scientific knowledge of his day. Thus too, he adapted his doctrines, which were written in Latin, to prevalent conceptions, encountering difficulties due to lack of terms to express spiritual ideas. It has frequently been pointed out that, were he writing today, these doctrines would be differently expounded, although remaining essentially the same.

His writings belong in a scale of values, beginning with the *Arcana Coelestia*, as the most important exegetical work, the most comprehensive exposition of the systematic principles, both theological and psychological. Some of the smaller works are based in part on the *Arcana*, or refer to it for fuller information and verification. Others, such as *The Divine Providence*, are devoted to special subjects, and follow in sequence from the *Arcana*. Again, there are “Memorable Relations” appended to some of the doctrinal expositions, and these demand careful study in order to disclose their empirical or supplementary value (some readers have rejected them altogether). *Marriage Love* (“Conjugal Love”) contains many vivid descriptions of modes of social life, with apparent concessions to the frailties of human nature as observed by Swedenborg in his travels and his studies of social life as existing in his day. These apparent concessions might easily be misinterpreted if attributed to heavenly types of society, identified with the Christian, or adopted as rules of conduct. Plainly, the teachings set forth in that work belong in a certain scale, to be ascertained, not by study of *Marriage Love* alone, but when the theological system is rightly understood. What is claimed for Swedenborg by his more enlightened followers is that “the truth in all his theological works is on the same level of Divine

authority.” This then is the standard, not uncertain matters of the “Memorable Relations,” or the ambiguities of certain portions of *Marriage Love*. Granted this, it is understood in what sense Swedenborg proceeds as all writers do, citing Scripture to prove his points, appealing to reason in the reader as to a criterion, drawing inferences, and arriving at conclusions, even in his final summary of doctrines which he regards as revealed, *The True Christian Religion*. In short, he expects to be read with intelligence, and arranges his subject-matter as writers usually do in argumentative form, with a view to complete demonstration.

Chapter 52

Mysticism

Mysticism used to be classed by itself, without discrimination between the doctrine and the experiences which were supposed to establish it. The mystic was set apart, either because he was not worthy of consideration, or because in the eyes of his fellows or in his own estimation he was a privileged character. Anyone who should try to confute him would be called unenlightened. But to be an initiate was to be silent, since the mystical vision was said to be ineffable.

All this has been changed since Emerson uncritically classed Swedenborg as a mystic. William James showed that mystical experience is a type only, and so it became a question of psychological analysis of the experience prior to all estimates of the doctrine.³⁹⁰ Other scholars succeeded in describing the experience so that its elements were manifest. When the experience was brought into precise relation with everyday activities, the discovery was made that its constituents are those of any experience in which emphasis falls on immediacy or intuition, the striving for satisfaction, the eager outreaching of will, and the yearning of love for its object. For in any case thought, with its concealed interpretations, enters into the case. Comparative study disclosed the fact that mystical experiences are essentially the same the world over, while the formulations vary with the patterns of religious thought, for instance, in ancient India in contrast with Alexandria in the age of Plotinus or the Christian Middle Ages in the period of revolt against scholasticism.

Recently, the part played by spiritual preparation has been made clear, also the relation of mystical experiences to the sub-conscious. If the mystic is one who exaggerates his own importance, because he has enjoyed experiences said to be peculiar or incommunicable, the same is true in lesser degree of many of us; hence our self-importance, with our claims on behalf of superior intuition, our rapturous confusions of emotion and thought. It remains to test mystical doctrines by more persistently making allowances for the personal equation. Our common experiences of the love-relation are incommunicable. Experience of beauty is in a sense transcendent. There is a mystical element in the religious life in general. With good reason we find it advisable to put religious experience into the context of life as a whole. A few examples from recent literature will serve to enforce these points.

In his *Christian Mysticism*, Inge shows that both mysticism and mystic experience have been elements of Christianity from the beginning, but that it does not follow that Christianity is mysticism. The “purity of heart” signalized as the condition through which the Christian shall “see” God thus finds its proper place. We may then attribute to other sources those exaggerations of doctrine which entered Christian thought during the medieval period.

So, too, in *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, Inge has distinguished the relatively small mystical element from the rationalism which was borrowed from Plato, and Plotinus accordingly ceases to be the typical mystic. Taking one’s clue from this insight, one may trace the mystical doctrines which were interfused with Christian theology. As a result one is prepared to consider to what extent mysticism as a doctrine still survived in Swedenborg’s day and entered into his thought, and one finds that a totally new estimate is still more imperative than in the case of Plotinus.

From Inge, whose insight shows him to be wholly sympathetic with what is real and valuable in mystical experience and doctrine, it is interesting to turn to Leuba, well known for his physiological analyses of mystical experience, while lacking appreciation of such experience at its best. In his latest work, Leuba's criticism tends to explain away mysticism altogether. Yet he shows that all problems raised by the mystical life are "explicable in the same sense, to the same extent, and by the same principles as any other consciousness."³⁹¹ Therefore one is at liberty to develop the usual psychological clues afforded by the presence within human personality of any tendency, impulse, instinct, or motive implying an essentially dynamic conception of human nature.

In general, mystic experience is "any experience taken by the experience to be a contact (not through the senses), but 'immediate,' 'intuitive,' or union of the self with the larger-than-self." Thus, union with God, however regarded, would be an instance. Leuba quotes a briefer definition of mystical experience as "a consciousness of immediate relation with the Divine," and in another instance as "an intuitive certainty of contact with the supersensible world." Granted an experience thus understood, it is a question of study of its elements as we would investigate any evidence that there is a super-sensible world. Naturally the turning-point would be our conviction that man possesses a higher nature through which contacts with the spiritual world become possible. On Leuba's mode of explanation we would study Swedenborg's experiences by appeal to psychology, and estimate the doctrines in their own right, apart from any disparaging judgment passed on mystics.

It has long been customary to speak of a "sixth sense" or "god-consciousness," as if mystics had a special power for contact with the supersensible world. But while we find in current studies abundant recognition of belief in a mysterious faculty, we meet no psychological

justification of this idea. Thus Lehmann finds that the true mystic, although silent on this point, believes in a sixth sense, a dormant power for approaching higher things. Oneness of the soul with the Divine Being is accordingly a special “conceit” of mysticism.³⁹²

The difficulty is that mystical experience, as described by the mystic himself, is “marked by the emergence of a type of consciousness which is not sharply focalized . . . into a subject-object state.”³⁹³ That is, the mystic (as subject of the experience) confuses his experience (the object) with himself so that the two are fused into an undivided whole. The experience is intense. It is impressively dynamic. It involves this fused or undifferentiated consciousness. The mystic, unable to discriminate, falls far short in his formulation of it; hence he adopts negative terms. The mystic’s emphasis on the “negative way” of denial through ascetic or other training follows as a consequence. Swedenborg would be accounted a mystic in these terms only in case we found him identifying his own experience with the Lord, and confessing himself wholly unable to rationalize either his doctrine of the Lord or his approach to conjunction with Him. And we find that the opposite of this is true; his doctrine of degrees saves him from such confusion.

Again, in the extremely sympathetic studies of the lives and teachings of the mystics by Evelyn Underhill we find the same discriminations, with the reminder that the mystic’s symbology should not be confused with mystical experience. Miss Underhill defines mysticism as the “expression of the innate tendency of the human spirit towards complete harmony with the transcendental order.”³⁹⁴ That is, it is normal for all of us to aspire toward conjunction with God. The tendency of the experience of the mystic is to “mystic union” as a life-process, in contrast with the intellectual speculation. It then becomes a question of analyzing the psychological content of both the experience and the formulation, for example, the different symbols by which the spiritual world is represented, such that in each group of symbols there is disclosed a picture

of the country of the soul as seen through a different temperament. There are three great classes of mental imagery, and behind these are three great cravings: those of the pilgrim or wanderer, of the lover, and of the one who craves inward purity and perfection. Thus under the terminology of the pilgrimage symbol perfection is conceived as a beatific vision, exterior, far off, the soul being outward bound towards its home. In terms of the imagery of human love and marriage, mysticism is an intimate and personal relation, the satisfaction of a deep desire. For example, in Christianity there is the personal aspect of the Godhead, Christ being an object of such intimacy. In the third group, the Divine is portrayed as a transcendent Life immanent in the world and in the self, with regard to which there is an inward change rather than an outgoing search, regeneration being the watchword.

The experience behind all this symbology is mostly un-utterable. Hence language at once exact and affirmative is hard to find. There is an un-extinguishable conviction that there are other planes of being than those which the senses report; thus arises the craving for hidden knowledge. Thus, too, comes about the doctrine of analogy, or implicit correspondence between appearance and reality, the microcosm of man and the macrocosm of the universe, the seen and the unseen worlds. The principle of correspondence is regarded by Miss Underhill as a sound one, so long as it works within reasonable limits, in the Kabbalah, the Hermetic writings, in Boehme, and in Swedenborg.³⁹⁵

The general implication is that there is a real super-sensible cosmic medium which interpenetrates, influences and supports the tangible world; there is an established analogy and equilibrium between the real and unseen world, and the illusory world of manifestation on the plane of sense-perception, with the assumption that this analogy may be discerned and this equilibrium controlled by the disciplined will of man.

The “mystic way” grows out of this varied quest for the great goal and the need for self-discipline. The implication here is that the spiritual states of the soul constitute “one continuous process of transcendence,” a movement of consciousness from lower to higher levels of reality, the steady making of character in accordance with the independent spiritual world. The steps involve the awakening of the self to the consciousness of Divine reality, an experience which, usually abrupt and well-marked, is accompanied by intense feelings of joy and exaltation; a sense of finiteness and imperfection, with a need for purgation; of joyful consciousness of transcendent reality; of mystic pain, “the dark night of the soul;” and later a state of union or equilibrium, and of spiritual life yielding enhanced powers and intense certitude (not ecstasy, but only a foretaste). All this, with its bearing on regeneration, involves conversion, a shifting of the field of consciousness from lower to higher levels, and the emergence of intuitions from below the threshold, with a consequent remaking of the field of consciousness, rather than a sudden and emotional acceptance of theological beliefs. The result is an alteration of the self’s attitude toward the world, a change or emergence which is enormous in its effect on the mystic’s life.

So, too, in the acute distinctions drawn by Rufus Jones, mysticism as the cult of the supernatural is distinguished from the immediate experience of a Divine-human intercourse and relationship.³⁹⁶ In contrast with this first-hand experience involving the idea of the soul’s possible union with God, Mr. Jones is inclined to limit the term mysticism to the doctrine. The mystical experience in itself, not being sharply focalized so that subject and object are discriminated, is such that the individual soul “feels invaded, vitalized with new energy, merged with an enfolding presence. This experience is distinctly an inner event, one of the great tap-roots of personal religion.” The prime consequence is an “undemonstratable but irrefragable certainty of higher personal life in contact with the personal self, and revealing a super-addition

of life-functions and new depth-levels of truth.” Mr. Jones holds that the mystical experience has a cognitive value, it yields knowledge of higher reality. But he concludes that this knowledge-process consists “in leaps of insight through heightened life, in an intensifying of vision through the fusing of all deep-lying powers of intellect, emotions and will, and in a corresponding surge of conviction through the dynamic integration of personality, rather than in the gift of new knowledge-facts.”

The doctrine growing out of this rich experience involves in turn an idea of union with the Absolute, a mystical way of attaining this goal, and the conception of a power in the soul which makes such a union possible—an “original ground of junction of soul with God, an unlost and inalienable soul-center.” Since the Reality sought is “super-empirical,” belonging to a higher order of being, the negative way of quest for it follows as a natural result. In contrast with those in whom the union with God is found in lesser form, Mr. Jones holds that in Christ’s own personal case there is implied the “supreme mode of true mystical experience, the words and acts being penetrated with an infinite depth of experience . . . fused with a warmth and intimacy of direct fellowship with God” so that there is revealed an “inner *sense of life* which explores and possesses new depths of reality and which releases for Himself and others new energies by which to live.”

This penetrating analysis accords with Mr. Jones’ fundamental distinctions between two great tendencies in religion: (1) Religion as permanent and unchanging; and (2) the tendency to revivify and reshape religion through fresh and spontaneous experiences.³⁹⁷ That is, religion is both eternal and temporal, a child of permanence and change. Mysticism discloses to us that type of religion which puts the emphasis on immediate awareness of relation with God, on direct and intimate consciousness of the Divine presence. Hence it is religion that is in its “most acute,

intense and living stage.” The mysticism of the Gospels was implicit, unconscious, never subjected to reflection or made explicit in thought. But every disciple was summoned to a direct and conscious incoming of the Divine life, so that wherever two or three were gathered they were to expect the presence which was to be with them “always.”

This unsurpassed study suggests that for everyone who takes the doctrine of influx as an actual guide to life, instead of permitting it to be a dead-letter, the mystical experience at its best is the means for all religious people to direct relation with God and the spiritual world. In this sense mystical experience is the universal means of discovery and verification. If Swedenborg is to be regarded as in any sense a mystic, it is on this universal basis, with the qualification that his experience was twofold: (1) There was an element which convinced him of the reality and nearby presence of the Lord; and (2) multiform experiences which for him implied the real presence of angels and spirits seen and heard in a world which could be accurately described.

We note that the moment we start to describe the mystical way of seeking religious experience and regeneration there are radical points of divergence. This method, which has so often in the history of mysticism, involved ascetic practices for controlling mind and body as a means to spiritual contemplation, involves a different psychology. For instance, there was in both Neo-Platonic and Christian mysticism emphasis on three stages of development culminating in an ecstasy or union with Deity in which all distinctions were lost. The fused consciousness of which Mr. Jones speaks was therefore deemed highly desirable. The object was the merging of the mystic in the object of his contemplation. Hence the explanation offered was that of subject and object, Deity and man, had become one.

We find nothing like this in Swedenborg, save that in the transition from his scientific period he put himself through a process of purification similar to one of the mystical stages. But this self-examination is common to many methods of advancement to a better mode of life. Swedenborg does not adopt the negative way. He does not advise the reader to indulge in any kind of mystical practice. He is far from being an ascetic, far from counseling asceticism. His method involves no mystical “blending” of subject with object, not even with reference to the inmost, where God and man are most nearly contiguous. He endeavors to retain all distinctions, not to “merge” or lose them; and his doctrine or discrete degrees separates his mode of thought from that of all mystics, Oriental and Occidental. From the first his intention in breaking away from his former pursuits was different from that of the devotee who hoped to be united with the Absolute in a super-conscious ecstasy, for he hoped rationally to explain every step of the way. His interest was unlike that of the medieval mystic who contemplated Christ in a very personal way as the object of love identified with the Church. Swedenborg was calmly intellectual, severely so; prosaic and methodical, in contrast with mystics who held that religious reality is above reason (supra-rational or supra-essential) and supernatural. His method was limited by appeal to his dictate, and the systematic study of Hebrew and Greek texts. His method was indeed intuitive, but this did not make him a mystic, any more than an artist or inventor who works by intuition is a mystic.

Union with God is the goal of Swedenborg’s thought, but this is to be union with the Lord as definitely conceived through conjunction of man as a finite spirit, sharply distinguished from the Infinite. This goal is not to be attained through a union suggestive of pantheism as a doctrine, the losing of one’s self in the Absolute, or in the mystical unison essentially emotional

in type “far transcending symbols.” The basis of this conjunction on the human side is union of will and understanding, in which the intellect is emphatic, and with rightness of conduct as a test.

Mysticism as a doctrine has often been identified with a certain exaltation of the self, involving self-realization as the goal of regeneration. Both in Swedenborg’s psychology the self is differently conceived, hence the beatific union is not to be self-consciously sought. Since no self-exaltation is permissible there is no room for the confusion whence spring spiritual pantheism (God and the soul one) or that type of pantheism which, because it ignores the natural world, is called “acosmism.” Reformation and regeneration are described around the idea of the self as a receptacle, which is transmissive in function. Perception is put in the place of ecstasy as the highest means of attaining knowledge, and ecstasy has no place at all, save so far as in mild form it may be said to be included in “blessedness” and “delight” in heavenly truth and life. The lower mind is not to be negated and the self is not to be denied; instead, the mentality of a higher degree is to come into power, using the lower as instrumental.

Finally, this system is distinguished from mysticism by its cautious use of the idea of immediacy, whereas in mystical doctrines the immediacy of both experience and intuition is an important conception. On the other hand, this system offers its own explanation of mystical experience, as due to *mediate* influx not yet understood by mystics. There is no denial of the reality of mystical experience. The description is different because the explanation is different, while the doctrine of the Lord is offered as the true principle of interpretation, correcting the fallacies of all mystical theology. Hence no one should court mystical experiences, or bring forward mystical doctrines as the test of spiritual reality. With the partisan of such doctrines one may indeed affirm that there exists a power for the apprehension of spiritual reality, hence that mystical experiences has knowledge-value.

Exception would be taken to most of the terms applied to this spiritual power; for example, the term “Divine spark,” on the ground that the doctrine of discrete degrees is thereby ignored. This power in us is not “creative reason,” not a “recollective faculty,” and not the “abyss of the mind.” It is not even the “inward light,” if by this term man’s own ability is signified; the light is that of heaven shining into man’s spirit according to the degree of his openness. It is the “apex of the mid” only in case this apex is regarded as the *inmost*. It is not the “ground of consciousness” since consciousness is produced through influx, and has no self-generating “ground.” It is not “pure reason,” for the inmost is more truly the heart. But the term “inmost” may well be taken in the sense of the ideal which mystics have sought to realize. In this sense the true mystic will still be “silent,” unable to describe in our faulty speech the nearness of the Lord, when the Divine life imbues the spirit of man as Love and Wisdom. There is indeed an inward Light. In man there is indeed an “unlost and inalienable soul-center.” And the “dynamic integration of personality” is devoutly to be wished.

Thus carefully distinguished, mystical experience may be regarded as “first-ade,” in contrast with ordinary religious doctrines. It is like knowing life by *living*, realizing that love is by being in love. In this sense it is religion itself. What is to be guarded against is the notion that the experience is so intimately personal that it is incommunicable by appreciative description, hence that all effort to analyze and explain it should be given up. In the history of mysticism the peculiar features of the experience have often been so dwelt upon as to create the impression that the occasional ecstasy, which has occurred only a few times, is such that one cannot tell whether he is in the “seventh heaven” or not. Because of this extreme emphasis, critics have said of the mystic: he is taking himself too seriously, is seeing things out of proportion. Hence it has been customary to discount everything mystical, *because the mystic has had “visions.”* Or, again,

because of the pathological or psychopathic element, in some cases, it has been a simple matter to attribute the occasional upheaval to bodily causes. Bodily emotion, or complexes due to sexual suppression, may indeed have been influential in some cases. In fact, such emotion might easily be misinterpreted as “spiritual.” Certainly no mystic should be taken as a representative man because of the extremes of his experiences. All this exaggeration may, however, be accounted for when the mystical experience is reduced to its elements, psychologically described and spiritually interpreted.

The overwhelming experiences of the mystics who have enjoyed the beatific vision or ecstasy, interpreted in Hindu terms as the Absolute (Brahm), or in Christian terms as oneness with Christ, find a different interpretation in Swedenborg’s terms. Our seer describes himself actually *in* the spiritual world, actually *seeing* it; he characterizes his experiences throughout in terms of “things seen and heard.” Consequently, he does not attempt to clothe his experiences in symbolic language, as if he regarded them as “values.”

For the Hindu mystic the spiritual world is identical with the Absolute. He is a lonely contemplative. He makes what Plotinus calls the “flight of the alone to the alone.” The Neo-Platonic mystic contemplates his spiritual world as a realm of thought, which he intersperses between the one Being and the many finite beings, who are sunk in awareness of obstacles and limitations. The Platonizing Christian also generated his own spiritual world. So did the Christian saint, whose theology supplied his subject-matter. Swedenborg’s spiritual world is as different in type at many points, notably because of his conception of spiritual substance as grounded in forms corresponding to those we know in the natural world, that we must infer many differences in his experience, and complete the description by classing him as unique in type.

Our seer believed himself to be the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, chosen to make known the spiritual sense of the Word as the Second Coming. He would wish to be judged by his doctrines, whatever allowances a reader like Emerson might make for the personal equation. It is the spiritual world that is to be regarded as real, not the seer's experiences as alleged projections of his symbology. Swedenborg avoids the pitfalls of "deification," which led some of the Christian mystics to be condemned as heretics. He takes radical exception to any such enlargement of the self. To him, pantheism of any sort is a falsity, utterly repugnant; while deification is inexpressibly horrifying, the greatest of doctrinal errors. Once granted this cardinal falsity, all the fallacies of self-exaltation follow, and all the fantasies of self-love. One's cosmos, then, becomes "all ego" with a vengeance.

Mystical theology indulges in symbols, and Swedenborg's doctrine is replete with symbols. But he does not rest his doctrine of correspondences between the letter of a doctrine and its inner meaning on his own experiences, as if, like those of the mystics, these were to give character to his whole teaching. He would also object that these symbols are not mere analogies. He maintains that these correspondences are discoverable by exegesis, and hence, are present in the Word for anyone to see. As a writer he is much less symbolical than the mystics. He does not depend upon emotional or aesthetic values. He scarcely ever makes an exception in favor of the unutterable. He endeavors to explain "mysteries," but he is matter-of-fact in doing so. He offers "arcane of heaven," but these are by way of acutely rationalized explanations; they are *meanings*, not mystical symbols. His theology is far from being mystical.

We conclude, then, that not in method of thought or personal training, by appeal to experience, in language or symbology, or with reference to doctrine is Swedenborg a mystic. With good reason, his name is nearly always omitted from works on mysticism, from

encyclopedias devoted to religious topics, from histories of thought including references to religious doctrine, from psychologies of religion, from philosophies of religion, and from comparisons between Oriental and Occidental spiritual systems. When he is mentioned, in brief, it is in some minor connection, not with an attempt to describe and explain him. He is never regarded as typical by writers most skilled in describing either mystical experience or mystical doctrine. He is not, in fact, in any case a representative man of the type ordinarily referred to as mystics, although his thought resembles that of Plotinus at certain points. Plotinus was one of the most rationalistic of those thinkers who have been classed as mystics. Hence, the disparaging views which have been entertained concerning Swedenborg's experiences would one and all turn upon interpretations of experiences of a type other than mystical. These views lead to such questions as the following: (1) Does man possess spiritual sense, spiritual eyes, or inner vision capable of *seeing* the supersensible world which exists for all mankind? (2) Do fixed relations exist between the supersensible world and the natural, such that these are discernible apart from all that is regarded as illusory in psychical phenomena? and (3) Is there a science of spiritual realities, including the principle of correspondences?

In arriving at the conclusion that Swedenborg was not a mystic, but should be judged by reference to his doctrines and his psychology of the present spiritual life in the natural world, we have, however, admitted a certain difficulty involved in the whole subject. Mystical experiences, as these are carefully discriminated by such writers as Rufus Jones, contain elements which everyone would accept who believes in the presence of God and the nearness of the spiritual world. No one would wish to rule out these the higher and more convincing elements of such experiences. And our seer surely believed, as profoundly as any mystic, in the nearness of

spiritual reality. No one could on his doctrinal grounds object to the fullness of religious experience.

It is on the ground of description, explanation, and doctrine that we distinguish between our seer's teaching and that of any mystic known to history. To adopt any description of direct religious experience, particularly the seer's experience, would be to attribute meanings to it not found anywhere in his system. To agree to mystical explanations would be to overlook the special explanation offered by our seer; his doctrine differs in type from the long list of doctrines offered throughout the ages. His doctrine is put first in order of reality and value; whereas, in mysticism, *immediate experience* is first in order of time, first in authority, and it looms large in comparison with the doctrines later adopted by way of interpretation.

Yet, granted these differences, our seer's doctrine may be said to come, not to destroy, but to fulfill, so far as mystical experience is concerned. For the spiritual or supersensible reality so profoundly believed in by mystics—because their experience is so convincing—surely exists, and man unmistakably possesses a nature such that the apprehension of spiritual reality is possible. What is needed is knowledge of the inmost region of the self, of influx, and correspondences. Then, mysticism as a doctrine can be avoided from start to finish. To avoid over-exaltation of the self, as the recipient of such experience, would be to avoid the negations of the methods of purification and contemplation typical of most forms of mysticism. If, with the novelist and poet Evelyn Underhill, we substitute the terms “contemplative” and “intuitive” for *mystical*, we observe that the first term is lacking in Swedenborg.³⁹⁸ The intuitions are not in a psychological class by themselves. The same processes are at work. Swedenborg showed that spiritual perception is an intellectual process, due to heavenly light.

Again, we emphasize the conclusion that our seer should be judged by himself, because his system of correspondences, to be tried out in its fullness, and should be regarded as *objective*, never as the symbology of subjective experience, as if concocted from within. Granted its applicability to the Word, and its universal validity as a principle of relationship between the two worlds, we have a precise doctrine by which to test the symbology of all mystical doctrines, ridding these of elements peculiar to this or that form of mysticism. It is what is universal, that signifies, not the peculiar. The peculiar is apt to be merely subjective and transitory.

In other words, there is a core of reality within all mystical experience at its best. This is to be accounted for on the universal principle that the Divine is present as Love and Wisdom with every human soul. Some men are much more susceptible to influx than others. To these nothing in the world is as real as the Divine presence. But those who are most susceptible may be least able to distinguish between Presence and participant. Hence, spiritual pantheism, or confusion between God and man, due to the overwhelming character of the experience, is a perfectly natural doctrine for mystics to adopt. Indeed, mystical doctrines, in general, readily follow among all who are, as yet, uninformed regarding discrete degrees.

The doctrine of discrete degrees once accepted, there is no alternative save to correct mysticism where it ordinarily parts company with rationalism, and to maintain that right doctrine is far more important than experience. For the final test, we repeat, it is not ecstasy, not emotional union with the Divine; it is spiritual perception; spiritual reality as disclosed by the open vision. Mystical intuition, even at its best, is inferior to this insight. The mystic is one whose eyes are not yet open so that he can discern both the Lord and the supersensible world, with its inhabitants. Consequently, he *groups as one*, those elements which, according to Swedenborg, are distinctly different. As a result, he is unable to separate immediate from

mediate experiences. Therefore, he forgoes all attempts to define his experience at precisely the point where, according to our seer, it can be explicitly defined. The final evidence in favor of Swedenborg's doctrine turns, therefore, upon the validity of his revelation.

Mysticism has been persistently individualistic, as a "flight of the alone to the alone." Its correctives, in modern terms, are found in the life of the community. Here our seer is in agreement with modern thought, for instead of pointing forward to a heaven in which the soul is to be caught up by a beatific vision, he refers his readers to the Grand Man as essentially social. A sense of spiritual aloneness might easily lead to pantheism or deification. Extreme mysticism has readily tended in that direction. But, mysticism as a moderate element of religion mingling with other elements, has tended away from both deification and pantheism. Hence, we find the meditative life supplemented by good works in the world. Ordinarily, it is better not to be classed as a mystic, for people persistently judge by classifications. Swedenborg's doctrine before us points the way from the excesses so readily associated with mysticism, because (1) it does not substantiate the mystical view of feeling and emotion; (2) does not disparage reason; but (3) by reiterating its warnings concerning self-love guards against the dangers of self-centeredness, and counsels religious people in general not to take themselves too seriously. To read Swedenborg at his best, is to take him as just Swedenborg in these respects, noting that for him the spiritual world is not a subjective process within himself, awaiting symbolical description. It is an objective field of experience which he looks into, there discerning his languages of correspondences writ large.

Chapter 53

Psychical Research

The theory of seership which we have adopted is that one who speaks from the viewpoint of a two-world experience has a great advantage, and should be estimated on the basis of conviction concerning the reality of these worlds. Hence, we are primarily concerned with the doctrine of reality, not with the seer's collateral experiences. We have been unable to identify Swedenborg with any mystic, despite the fact that he proposed a system of symbols externally resembling those of mysticism. On the assumption that this system was projected by the seer into a spiritual world of his own creation, we would have a long series of discriminations to account for, whatever our conclusion concerning such projections. But this psychology describes, with minute thoroughness, the kind of spiritual senses we would expect man to possess, on the presumption that he is fitted for contact with the spiritual world. This is primarily a psychology of spiritual perception, and anyone who ventures to underestimate it has the burden of proof on his shoulders. Given this perception, it should be possible to distinguish between (1) Divine truths, eternal, and universal, made known by direct insight, and disclosed in the Word; and (2) the utterances of any angel or spirit, the mere deliverances of memory, or any series of mystical or spiritistic symbols projected into the spiritual world by the uninitiated.

There remains a line of argument against the conviction that the revelations and collateral experiences are real. This line of objections is based on the notion that the experiences and doctrines are a synthesis of thoughts produced in the seer's inner consciousness. Swedenborg's

doctrines have been identified with spiritism by writers who have touched only a few phases of the seer's work, by exaggeration of his psychical experiences. Thus, it has been assumed that the theological works were produced by automatisms, a strange assumption, in view of the fact that Swedenborg's experiments with automatic writing covered an extremely brief period, in the intermediate stage described in his *Spiritual Diary*. The seer renounced this method in favor of the interpretation of the Word. His researches, involving minute study of the text, with comparisons between passages collated from all parts of the Scriptures, were as far removed as possible from either automatism or trance-phenomena, despite the fact that the principles of interpretation were attributed to the spiritual world.

The spiritual world was more elaborately described than in the works of any other writer. But this description was incidental to the exposition of the Word and the disclosure of the spiritual nature of man. From this description, many people have gained their interest in spiritistic matters, notably from *Heaven and Hell*, which has been widely read by people eager for knowledge of the future life. But this interest, insofar as it has led to emphasis on automatism, mediumship, and allied phenomena, is directly contrary to Swedenborg's explicit warnings that one should have nothing to do with such matters.

Naturally, Swedenborg has been heralded as the prophet of spiritism. But, in works on the history of the subject, one finds no evidence of insight into either his doctrines or his experiences. He is classed by Lewis Spence as "one of the greatest mystics of all time," and is described as "intrinsically honest."³⁹⁹ The implication is that mysticism is a clue to occultism, and that Swedenborg is to be taken as a guide to secret doctrines and magic. But this estimate implies misapprehension from the start since the theological works draw lines of radical distinction between (1) phenomena and theories involving the occult, the magical, or miraculous,

all such matters being explained in detail; and (2) doctrines given by revelation, to be interpreted by spiritual perception.

Again, Frank Podmore^{‡‡} in his critical estimate of spiritism, considers Swedenborg as a forerunner of the modern movement, but without analyzing either the seer's experiences or his doctrines.⁴⁰⁰ This is rather remarkable, for Podmore was an acute scholar, capable of sifting evidence; he doubted the validity of any psychical experience, even telepathy. Other writers on spiritism have shown the same unwillingness to apply the careful method of inquiry which they adopt in other connections. The implication is that these writers have never discriminated between spiritism and mysticism (there is no necessary connection), and have never separated *experiences* bordering on psychical phenomena from *doctrines* based upon them.

Much more painstaking are the references to our seer in the work on psychical research by the late Frederic William Henry Myers, the genius of that special field.⁴⁰¹ These references imply a theory of seership which may well be considered in detail, since Myers comes nearer than any other critic who has made an attempt to explain Swedenborg.

Myers rightly regards our seer as the originator of the idea of science in the spiritual world. "It was first to Swedenborg that the unseen world appeared before all things as a realm of law; a region not of mere emotional vagueness or stagnancy of adoration, but of definite progress according to definite relations of cause and effect, resulting from structural laws of spiritual existence and intercourse which we may in time learn partially to apprehend."⁴⁰² Our seer is not to be taken as an "inspired teacher, or even a trust-worthy interpreter of his own experiences,"

^{‡‡} English author Frank Podmore (1856-1910) was not only one of the founding members of the Fabian Society, but due to his long time interest in Spiritualism, was a founding member of the Society for Psychical Research. His publications include *Apparitions and Thought-Transference* (1892), *Studies in Psychical Research* (1897), *Modern Spiritualism* (1902), *The Naturalisation of the Supernatural* (1908), *Mesmerism and Christian Science* (1909), *Telepathic Hallucinations: The New View of Ghosts* (1909), and *The Newer Spiritualism* (1910).

but yet as a true and early precursor. He is credited with “some true experiences of the spiritual world,” and his writings contain descriptions of what he saw and felt in that world; with such inferences as his actual experiences suggested, including some hundreds of propositions in substantial accord with what has been given through the most trustworthy “sensitives” since his time. The “evidential” matter seems to Myers singularly scanty in comparison with the many years of communion with the departed. Myers is not interested in the doctrinal structure, and holds that, while Swedenborg was uniquely gifted, he was limited by his own faculties, and by “the practical humility of a spirit trained to acquire but not to generate truth.”⁴⁰³

This criticism is keenly suggestive, because it puts the psychology in striking contrast with the principle which was Myers’ chief contribution. Had our seer penetrated the spiritual world to discover and commune with the “departed,” in order to prove spirit-return to an eager world, his first interest would have been *evidence*. He would then have sought fact rather than doctrine, and might have proposed a theory similar to the one we are presently to consider. But this was never his interest.

It is interesting to note that Swedenborg was intimately acquainted by experience with the various types of psychical phenomena. He had frequently been in a trance condition, for example, sometimes for many hours, or even days at a time. On several occasions, he manifested extraordinary signs of seership, the facts being well authenticated by contemporary evidence.⁴⁰⁴ These experiences were regarded as proofs of actual intercourse with the spiritual world, and of exceptional powers of psychical vision. One of these instances was the disclosure of a secret between the Queen of Sweden and her deceased brother. Another incident involved the description of a fire in Stockholm, perceived psychically while Swedenborg was in Gothenburg. A third experience was the disclosure to the widow of M. de Marteville, formerly Dutch

Ambassador at Stockholm, of the hiding-place of a missing receipt for money paid by her husband. Two of these cases involved the gaining of information from people who had departed this life, the other, was a psychical vision of an event in process in the natural world.

Swedenborg is quoted as saying that such experiences were nothing remarkable, and that the instances he narrated were merely a few from among hundreds of similar experiences, all of which were trivial in comparison with the great object of his mission. These experiences simply bore testimony to the fact of his intromission into the spiritual world; their value was in the implied evidence that such a world exists.

Swedenborg neither sought such experiences, as valuable in themselves, nor as evidences of the existence of psychical forces or hidden psychical faculties. His trances were incidental to absorption in experiencing the spiritual world to the fullest extent. He seems never to have cultivated trances as means to revelation. To speak of his doctrines as “trance-revelations,” would be to discount the standard by which all such psychical phenomena are judged. It can hardly be said that evidential matter is lacking in Swedenborg’s works, in view of the fact that he records the experiences of twenty-seven years of almost daily contact with the spiritual world. The difficulty is that critics do not like to undergo the labor of searching those works to discover how the evidences are interpreted.

Returning to Myers, with the conclusion that Swedenborg was not interested in psychical phenomena, we note that our seer did not put his works forward as a precursor of psychical research, but as the guide to the Second Coming of the Lord, a radically different interest. He does not undertake to “generate” truth, because his primary concern is to disclose only those truths which may be discriminated as (1) not one’s “own;” and (2) as not attributable to angels or

spirits, and not derived by “trance-revelations.” The doctrine adopted as a standard is, admittedly, put forth with such insistence that Myers describes Swedenborg’s mind as “stiff.” This insistence is resolute because one must possess Divine truth in order to discern spiritual reality amid psychical appearances, and *know* the spiritual world in contrast with “projected” theories.

The theological works are not meant to be experiential. Swedenborg details his own experiences of the spiritual world as incidental to the dictate which guided him in unfolding the spiritual meaning of the Word. He does not appeal to the reader to seek similar experiences in order to verify the doctrines. The contrast between this teaching and psychical research will become clear, if we briefly consider Myers’ theory of personality.

Myers takes that man to be “normal” who has “the fullest grasp of faculties which inhere in the whole race.”⁴⁰⁵ The normal includes consciousness, as we all know it, and also the mental life which functions below the threshold. Any act or condition of our mental life is to be classed as conscious, if it can be recollected. Our central consciousness is elaborated out of many minor consciousnesses; consciousness is the psychical counterpart of “life,” which originated on an unseen, or spiritual plane of being. These psychical counterparts cohere in human personality, in which there is a central current of perception or controlling coordination of thought. Genius, as the distinctive instance of highly integrated consciousness, implies the bringing to the surface of other phases of mental activity described by Myers as “subliminal” (below the threshold where activities begin to engage our attention). Genius appropriates the results of this hidden mentation by means of an “uprush” (inspiration or emergence) into the current of ideas which a man is consciously manipulating. Hence, the genius unifies ideas consciously acquired with those unwittingly derived from the subconscious.

Thus defined, the genius is the standard for all men; there is, in his case, a “successful” cooperation between an unusual number of elements of personality. The range of our subliminal mentation proves to be more extended than our ordinary consciousness, as evidenced by the great productions of men of genius. In their minds, perceptions are presumably more vivid and complex. A narrow selection from many uprushes or emergencies makes possible a greater piece of creative work. Thus, too, mathematical prodigies are accounted for. In any type of genius there is “cooperation of the submerged with the emergent self,” a large infusion of the subliminal in the mental (conscious) output.

The point of contact with the spiritual world is in this submerged region of personality. There, the relationship is closer than in our conscious moments. Hence, the inspirations of men of genius spring from a source one step nearer primitive spiritual reality. There may be elements of thought in the productivity of genius such that the deliverances of inspiration are incommensurable with the results of (conscious) logical thought. Thus, Myers leaves room for entrance from the spiritual world of some form of intelligence other than that which we know in routine processes of reason. Thus, the famous inner guide of Socrates may be said to imply the subliminal self of a man of transcendent genius. It is possible, then, for the mind to acquire information through higher sources. The ideal for all would be to attain a higher unification of human powers, including the deep-lying activities of the subconscious. Doubtless, Myers would have said that Swedenborg’s mind included as wide a range in the subliminal region as that of any man known to history. The information enabled him to give the most complete description of the spiritual world.

Myers’ two significant propositions are these: (1) there is in man a soul which can draw strength and grace from a spiritual universe; and (2) in this universe, there is a Spirit accessible

and responsive to the soul of man. To this Spirit may be attributed forms of “spiritual indrawing” implied in every mode of spiritual response. Myers does not, then, assume that the finite self originates its inspirations, as if the wisdom were self-derived. His description agrees at many points with the psychology of the inmost in relation to Divine influx. The doctrine of influx renders his view more intelligible. Myers keeps clear of mystical doctrine and theology. He puts his psychology on the basis of experience. Thus, the spiritual world becomes *a fact of experience* made intelligible as a fact because, subliminally, we have the equipment for contact with it.

The point of divergence lies here: In Myers’ account the effort is made to describe and explain every spiritual experience with reference to uprushes from the subliminal region, in order that, when spirit-return must be admitted, the fact of spirit-presence shall be distinctively established. Myers describes and explains, so far as he can, in strictly human terms. Swedenborg starts and ends with the Lord as the source of all spiritual activity whatsoever, and describes the human self as a receptacle, rather than a creative agent. Myers extends the subliminal self far into the spiritual world; while Swedenborg characterizes human life as penetrated by influxes from that world, the extension of the self being decidedly limited. Myers would interpret spiritual experience after all returns are in, when skepticism has done its utmost to disprove spirit-return; Swedenborg teaches that one must know the human spirit to the foundation, to see in what respects our life coincides with life in the spiritual world.

On Myers’ hypothesis, Swedenborg’s doctrinal deliverances would be accounted for as unifications of preconceived ideas, and ideas procured through “subliminal mentation.” There would then be no need of revelation. Indeed, all revelations in history would take their places among works of genius, and the distinction between revealed and natural knowledge would be

rejected, together with the doctrine of discrete degrees. Not at all interested in, or persuaded by, Swedenborg's doctrinal arguments, they seemed as superfluous to Myers as to Emerson.

We may note in passing that, under the guise of the popular theory of the subconscious, Myers' view has become the accepted principle of explanation in many quarters today. Consequently, the mind is regarded as essentially self-operative. It is a matter of indifference whether one believes in Spirit, or in spirit-presences. Little heed is paid to ulterior origins and great interest is bestowed on the subconscious. Most people are content to leave the matter here. The believer in God may attach his own idea of Spirit to this theory. The spiritist may attribute whatever phenomena he will to spirits. The believer, in inner guidance, has a ready scheme of explanation for inner auditions, impressions, and premonitions. The theosophist may build his schematic world of planes, auras, astral bodies, and earth-bound spirits on this basis.

There is, of course, no ground for rejecting Myers' view so far as it serves for descriptive purposes. Whether or not we say that spirits function in our experience, we undoubtedly possess a larger selfhood than the customary stream of consciousness ever lets us know. Myers' theory begins to fall short when it becomes a question of interpretation. If we say there is a blending of the subliminal self with the spiritual world and with Spirit, we are left in doubt regarding the content of deliverances ostensibly embodying spiritual truth; we do not know to what extent a seer may be simply projecting his views into the other world. To press the hypothesis of projection in Swedenborg's case, would be to find his psychology on our hands for explanation. Myers' theory would apply to our seer's experimental period, when he was wrestling with dreams and psychical visions which he did not understand, rather than to his illumination with its long series of deliverances, including much more than otherworld "information." The hypothesis

of subliminal “uprushes” suggests cognitions within the self, rather than spiritual perceptions of a real world.

In terms of our seer’s psychology, an uprush yielding Divine truth is not due to self-operative activity of any sort. An uprush presupposes spiritual influx as its efficiency. Our new ideas are not by-products of subliminal processes, but are wrought according to Divine providence with spiritual ends in view. Our larger selfhood is copious indeed; but it is the largeness of degrees and planes (internal and external), of will and understanding, the two rationals, the spiritual mind and the natural mind. Since man is not *aware* of the incoming influx at any point, spiritual doctrine is essential. Much that exists “below” the threshold for Myers, is for our seer’s psychology *within* the larger self, notably in case of the inmost, which is interior to any process described in Myers’ terms. We conclude, then, that the psychology of inner perception involving its celestial relationships begins where Myers’ theory of the subliminal self leaves us uncertain.

Myers’ psychology has special value for psychical matters still in doubt. A healthy skepticism has become common since the days of psychical research. It now seems more intelligible to say that our minds have subconsciously wrought messages purporting to come from spirits, especially when these claim to be historical personages who doubtless left the world of spirits generations ago. Such messages read dangerously like our own judgments of those who once lived on earth. Naturally, too, we are skeptical of automatic writing and other automatisms.

Even if a real spirit succeeded in actually braving the bristling front of our doubts, putting a message through by some form of psychical mechanism, an alleged subliminal uprush purporting to convey the message would take on so much content from our exterior memory that

we could not be certain. Alleged information about things in this world would also be gathered from this storehouse. So, too, our minds might contribute a theory, given back to us as an explanation—as if it came with august authority from the spiritual world. It is a matter of suspicion that believers in reincarnation, for instance, when receiving spirit-messages, receive back what they already believe; while people who hold another hypothesis find their own view confirmed, and the hypothesis of reincarnation denied. Rich indeed are the products of our subliminal mechanism.

Nothing follows, thus far, concerning what is true or false in doctrine. The safer view is that the subject-matter of our own minds is rehabilitated. Thus, spiritism may be propounded, theosophy, occultism, mysticism, orthodoxy, liberalism, or even agnosticism. In the same way a supposed historical personage may be the joint product of several minds. The subliminal region is, indeed, copious beyond all calculation. Any message purporting to come from the supersensible world is inevitably conditioned by the minds of recipients and participants. So, too, is any description of that world. Hence, the remarkable diversity of the symbols employed.

Yet, this need not invalidate our belief in the nearby presence of the spiritual world as a reality describable in terms which withstand the test of time. What is true of psychical experiences is not necessarily true of spiritual experience. Our higher experiences, attributable to Divine influx, not to psychical motives, are different in type; our spiritual selfhood is primarily due to our created origin, safeguarded by Divine truth. It is by *doctrine*, rather than by experience, that man knows there is a spiritual world. To govern his thought and life by this truth is to turn toward that world with a criterion by which to test every teaching and every experience. The implied science of relationship between the worlds is higher than any psychical science could ever be. The lower is always to be judged by the higher. The higher science is given that

man may have both life and truth from Divine sources. Any descriptive science may, then, be put in its proper setting, that the psychical may be estimated by the spiritual, not the spiritual by the psychical.

The same objection applies to Myers' theory which would be raised against mystical symbolism. If there are as many subliminal selves as people, we would be left with mere relativities. It would be impossible to refute the skeptics who insist that each person's symbolism is his own thought projected into the supersensible world. Our psychology assures us that we attain neither reality nor truth until we pass beyond all the relativities of ownhood. There is no standard in such relativities, because each individual utilizes his own psychical mechanisms. Thus, our study of objections in this and the preceding chapters, has strengthened the point of view of this psychology.

There is also a significant difference between our seer's doctrine of the future life, and the aims and objectives of psychical research. It is observable that our seer does not endeavor to prove immortality. Why is this? Because Swedenborg starts with the doctrine of the Lord, with the Word and what follows from acceptance of its spiritual meaning. This beginning implies, in turn, the prior reality of the spiritual world presupposed in any effort to establish the truth of immortality. The existence of that world is taken for granted in the fact that spiritual beings exist. To attempt to prove the immortality of the soul would simply be to make explicit the nature of the soul, already presupposed in this effort to prove that it is immortal. We have only to *know what spirit is*, to realize that no other inference save that of its immortality, is rationally possible. But abundant evidences of this truth are discoverable *after the fact*, that is, after the disclosure of the eternal being or reality of the Lord, in whose life the spiritual world is grounded. These

relationships will become clear if, in concluding this part of our inquiry, we outline the doctrines of eternity and life.

Knowledge of what eternity signifies seems, at first, wholly beyond us; for the Divine, “infinite in being,” is eternal in manifestation, and that which is finite can comprehend neither the infinite nor the eternal.⁴⁰⁶ Even the angels must depend in large measure on representations or appearances, and man’s conceptions are greatly inferior to angelic ideas. Hence, the difficulty we encounter when trying to comprehend what eternity is, what the Divine was before the world was created. Any thought from spatial and temporal imagery must be faulty in the extreme. Yet, our inquiry has already enabled us to appreciate, to some extent, why the Divine is not in space, what spiritual thought is apart from spatial terms, and why it is that, in the spiritual world, angels know “states” rather than spaces. Thus, in general, we may see why the angels, not conditioned by thoughts of time, can discern what eternity is as *an eternity of state*, not an eternity of time. Following this clue to spiritual thinking, we are prepared for the proposition that, in the Divine, there is eternity instead of time.⁴⁰⁷ But this does not mean remoteness from the realms of time and space, for the principle of correspondence once more guides us aright: times and spaces in the world correspond to infinity and eternity in the Divine. The intermediate term is the one already indicated, namely, spiritual states.

Otherwise stated, God sees all things and knows all things from eternity; also provides all things to eternity, as we have already noted in part when studying the Divine providence, which has regard for what is eternal.⁴⁰⁸ There is, indeed, no proportion between the eternal and the temporal. We could not find any such ratio were we to regard time as extended to thousands or myriads of years. For the years have an end, and what is eternal is without end. The utmost we can say is that what is eternal *is*, because it has being or essence from the Divine.⁴⁰⁹ “There

cannot be an infinity of time which is eternity *a quo*, because what is infinite is without first and last, that is, without boundaries.”⁴¹⁰ But having realized these difficulties, we are ready for the statement that “from thought abstracted from time and space there is a comprehension . . . of the Divine from eternity.”⁴¹¹ While we cannot think about nature from eternity (since nature had a beginning in created time), we can think about God from eternity, making our best effort to disengage such thinking from ideas in which the imagery of space and time inheres.

Moreover, the term “eternity” implies a scale of values. What is temporal is as nothing in comparison. What is eternal alone *is*. The life of heaven is eternal, especially the spiritual and celestial within the heavens. Again, life in the heavens is more heavenly in proportion as it is far from the things of time and space, and is near to that which is eternal. Man is predestined for the eternal life. Hence, this is the highest standard by which to estimate his life here. Indeed, “the being of man is nothing but a recipient of the eternal which proceeds from the Lord.”⁴¹² This means that all things essential to his total existence, having been foreseen with reference to their qualities, the development of man’s existence as ordinarily understood in relation to nature is the *representative* side of his life only, not its eternal aspect. Thus, the regeneration of man in the world of time and space is, at best, “only a plane for the perfecting of his life to eternity,” only a chapter, we might say. So, too, man as a natural being is merely a part of what man is as a spiritual being. Man is not immortal through participation in this temporal or natural process: he is eternal because he possesses an inmost in which the Lord dwells. We cannot, then, understand in what sense every man was created to live to eternity unless we realize how it is possible that all things are present at once to the Lord. We may thus, in a measure, grasp the great truth that the Divine omnipresence is not in any respect dependent on space, any more than the Lord’s presence is dependent on time. Given the idea that His essence is apart from time, and His

omnipresence apart from space, we may then endeavor to envisage space within His eternal presence, time within His eternal purposes.

We have already followed this order of thought in the foregoing chapters. The Lord as life itself, the *Esse* of life, because He is love, is that “only fountain of life” from which all life as derivatively made known, proceeds. As “the First of life,” He is eternal. Not until we come to the proposition that “each and all things have thence their *esse* and their life, does it become a question of processes requiring a temporal sequence for their development.

The statement that “whatever is from the Lord has life” has two meanings: (1) the eternal meaning, the life of love in the heavens, the descent of life through the three heavens which imbues man’s affections from the inmost and yields intelligence through wisdom; and (2) the temporal meaning by which man, in relating his conduct to the world, gives expression to goods and truths, also utilizing the possessions of his memory, “vivified” from the eternal source of intelligence. The Lord’s life flows immediately into all the heavens. In this sense, it is love towards the universal human race. But this life is also mediated to man the individual so that, whatever has life in the particulars of his temporal thought and will, is also from the same source. The true life, which is the life of love from the Lord, is also the source of the true joy and of the mutuality which constitutes the highest relationship between men. Thus, in every sphere of man’s activity the central clue lies in the Divine life with its two-fold meaning, the eternal and the temporal. So, too, the Word is distinguishable as eternal in the heavens and also “born” or “sent down” from heaven, as possessing the “veriest” Divine life and as giving life to man so that this life may be carried into outermost expression in daily affairs.⁴¹³

Finally, these differences are made clear through the tests which life itself discloses. In the highest sense, the life which is not eternal is not life at all, the life of the body and of the world is not life; but celestial and spiritual life alone is life. Indeed, “man’s own life . . . is not life, although it is called so, but is death.”⁴¹⁴ Negatively, this statement is true. Positively, the larger meaning is this: “We live to ourselves for the first time” when we receive spiritual perception from the Lord.⁴¹⁵ Not to have such perception, is to be in darkness. Not to have Divine truth is to be, as it were, dead. But truths and goods *vivified by the Lord* are “open, vital, full of what is spiritual and celestial, open even to the Lord; and thus in every idea and action.”⁴¹⁶ Given this the central principle, we understand in what sense other things are only instrumental. So, too, we see why, in the temporal sense “life without change and varieties would be one single life, thus no life.”⁴¹⁷ To penetrate deeply into the “life of uses” in our daily social existence, is no less surely to pass from the temporal to the eternal, thus, to understand why no other evidence of immortality is needed than that of the central truth of our being. For this, our “life of uses” is unintelligible save through knowledge of the ends for which we exist, these appertain to the Divine purpose and this, in turn, involves that social relationship without which heaven would not be heaven. Not even for an angel is life possible, save in some society “for there is never possible the life of anyone dissociated from the life of others.”⁴¹⁸

Appendix

As indicated throughout, the object of this study has been to determine Swedenborg's type of special reference to his psychology. Hence, I have adhered as closely as possible to our seer's mode of developing his rationalism, with the hope that his system would vindicate itself as a highly wrought doctrine interpretable in accordance with its central principles, in contrast with conventional judgments passed on it. Naturally, I have not been concerned with the opinion that Swedenborg was mentally unbalanced, except remotely. To regard that opinion as an established conclusion would be to prejudge all the doctrines. To discuss the question of mental unbalance, in general, with reference to spiritual experience would also be to prejudge instead of investigating. Instead, I have proceeded on the principle that it is normal to participate in experiences referring to the spiritual world, and that a philosophy of religion based on this approach is a defensible type of thought. Adopting the viewpoint of an expositor it has seemed to me a sufficient enterprise to differentiate Swedenborg's type with respect to such a philosophy. This enterprise will become still more clear if we venture beyond the scope of our inquiry at a number of points with special reference to criticisms which have been passed on Swedenborg by writers who failed to judge by the actual content of his doctrines before indulging in a critical commentary on his personality.

Blake and Swedenborg

It is instructive to compare Swedenborg's visions and their deliverances with those of William Blake, whose mysticism has led some critics to misjudge Swedenborg. Born in 1757,

Blake was brought up in a household of believers in Swedenborg's doctrines in England and, with his wife, was among the founders of the Swedenborgian Society of Great Eastcheap. For a time, Blake faithfully followed Swedenborg and borrowed his terminology and principal conceptions, an indebtedness which is shown even in the titles of such works as "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" and his "Memorable Fancies." Essentially mystical and visionary in type, Blake portrayed his weird visions on canvas and in verse in highly symbolical form. Not even the most ardent admirers of Blake's pictures and mysticism would mistake these fantastic productions for objective realities, as if Blake's symbolical spiritual world were the actual world of the universal future life. But, granted the obvious subjectivity of Blake's experiences, it might seem that Swedenborg's visions were no less fantastical, his symbology purely subjective, and his spiritual world a by-product of his imagination. In fact, there are several points of resemblance in the biographies of the two men to a certain point, where their pathways radically diverge.

The difference, psychologically speaking, lies in the use of imagination and reason. Agreeing with Swedenborg at first, at least until 1789, Blake rejected our seer when he saw that Swedenborg gave the first place to reason in accordance with what seemed to Blake a mere recapitulation of the theologies of the past, with all their errors. To avoid the limiting and petrifying influence of reason, with the restraints imposed by conventional distinctions between good and evil, Blake gave the first place to poetry or imagination. Following the poetic or aesthetic imagination, the great man seeks free, or complete self-expression. The true antithesis is not between good and evil, but between wisdom and folly. Blake's whole theory of life is developed in these terms, including his radical views on marriage.⁴¹⁹ His visions date from the age of four, and include reports of communications with spirits, two kinds of mental sight,

dictations, and symbolical conversations. From these experiences, the transition to mystical painting and poetry was a simple matter, including the creation of manifold fancies accompanied by violent emotions which, at times, brought the poet-artist to a state of collapse. The further Blake penetrated into the region of these symbols and fancies, the more radically he disagreed with Swedenborg.

For Swedenborg visions were not aesthetic fancies, emotionally to be enlarged upon; since this would mean departure from Divine reality into a purely imaginary world. Reason, the test which Blake rejected, was for Swedenborg, essential to spiritual perception, and without which he could not follow the objective highway of heavenly doctrine. Once started on the highway, there was for him no temptation to follow by-paths of fancy or aesthetic genius. Resolutely to follow that highway was zealously to guard the distinction between good and evil, never confusing the latter with folly, never intending wisdom with genius, as this term is used by artists. It was not the scenery along the way that was significant: it was the highway itself, that is, Divine truth revealed to, not created by, the human spirit. But Blake was indeed greatly interested in the scenery, notably that which his own mind generated with such remarkable productivity. He was and continued to be essentially a mystic, not of a religious type, but of the type which takes its clue from artistry, utilizing imagination to the full. To understand this type, its motives, its rejection of reason as the criterion, is to avoid any confusion between Blake and Swedenborg, to see how and why the subjective visions of the artist differed from the scriptural symbology of the seer.

Swedenborg's visions were, indeed, subjective during his dream-period. *The Worship and Love of God* is, in part, fanciful, and exemplifies Swedenborg's ability in that direction. But from the time all his energies were dedicated to the unfolding of the spiritual system of truths

contained in the Word *reason* (enlightened by spiritual perception) they became so markedly his standard that both imagination and emotion, inner experience and its tendency to envisage or objectify were utterly subject to his central purpose. Hence, for him, the system which he espoused was as independent of subjective creations as are the principles of mathematics, any one of which the scholar can demonstrate in a purely impersonal way. Swedenborg's highway led to a spiritual world which is to be the same in principle for all mankind. But there might be as many spiritual worlds of Blake's type as there are poets and painters to produce them. The subjectivity of the artist's world proves nothing in regard to the system of principles which the seer promulgated as "the way, the truth, and the life."

Naturally, there were some who thought Blake was mad. His own mother beat him when he claimed to see Ezekiel under a tree. As naturally, his devotees separate him from automatic writers, spiritists, and the like, pointing out that, if Blake was insane, all mystics and poets are mad too. In other words, Blake is admired for his type. Granted this insight, discriminations begin. So, too, they began for the followers of Swedenborg, for instance in England, when he was confused with spiritists, also when critics like Henry Maudsley^{§§} dismissed him as insane.

Intelligent comparison between the mystical artist and the religious seer begins with recognition of the differences between their products. The artist produces a picture which is out there yonder upon the wall for everyone to see. His picture is a finished product. The artist is admired because his vision (relatively fixed) yielded this completed thing. But the fancies and dreams of Swedenborg had no fixed value. Nor did he produce anything of determinate value in

^{§§} Pioneering British psychiatrist Henry Maudsley (1835-1918) was a trenchant materialist whose lectures on body and mind were carefully studied by Charles Darwin in the preparation of his *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). He contributed frequently to the *Journal of Mental Science* and was most known for his textbooks *The Physiology and Pathology of Mind* (1867), *Body and Mind* (1870), and *Mental Responsibility in Health and Disease* (1874). An avowed agnostic, he questioned the claims of supernatural experiences, explaining them in terms of various mind disorders.

his dream-period. The account he gave of his experiences was merely an item. His *Adversaria* marked a later and more important stage. So did his *Spiritual Diary*. What was significant was not any mere product of his experiences, but the fact that *his psychical experiences lived on*, and became intelligible only so far as they gave place to *spiritual* experiences when the rational understanding of the Word yielded the retrospective clue. Consequently, the question whether or not he was sane involves such matters as Johann Friedrich Immanuel Tafel discusses, that is, in terms of Swedenborg's total inner history and the products of his most enlightened period, his theological works.⁴²⁰ The rumor examined by Tafel has nothing to do with a study of the doctrines which rests upon the universal principles in their systematic relation to the Word.

The whole point of view concerning sanity has changed since the opinions in question were circulated. Nowadays, not even a Blake would be declared insane, despite the fact that he discussed free-love and painted utterly strange pictures. It is normal to discuss love or marriage in any form, also normal to express whatever one's artistry demands. It was normal for Blake to dedicate himself to his genius. It was normal for Swedenborg to follow his experiences in his dream-period and in his somewhat mystical imagery to the goal which his life-purpose eventually marked out. Having won the goal of his scientific and intermediate periods, he consigned all his earlier experiences and visions to a minor place in favor of the rational system which he hoped his readers would verify without seeking either such visions as he had, or any other type of psychical phenomena. Had the transitory experiences recorded in his *Dream Book* and in certain portions of the *Spiritual Diary* become dominant, they would undoubtedly have broken down the orderly habits of his years of scientific research. Instead, we find Swedenborg as normally dedicated to his investigations as in the period when he was acquiring and developing his method. Concentrating on his work with patient thoroughness, his work yielded

some of the best evidences of sanity: (1) the systematic correlation of data according to widely applicable principles, constantly employed; and (2) acute analysis of phenomena or data in a restricted portion of the given field, for example, investigation of the evidence which thrown light on the correlation of mind and brain, granted the adoption of one out of three possible hypotheses concerning this inter-relationship. In Swedenborg's case, this meant the conclusion that the influx-correspondence principle of correlation is to be preferred to hypotheses which, in the seer's day, were especially associated with the Cartesians and the followers of Leibniz. So we note the analysis of such matters as perception and rationality involving a fineness of distinction which compares favorably with the researches of contemporary specialists who have the advantage of the equipment now available. But (3) we find that this acute analysis of mental elements is surpassed by our seer's insight through which these psychological elements and principles are coordinated with the planes of descent from the Divine through the celestial and spiritual into the human mind as ordinarily known. The suggested comparison at this point is not with Blake; it is with those who, like Plotinus, adopted the Platonic-Aristotelian philosophy and tried to complete the conception of the Divine involution from the spiritual world into the natural. Untrammelled by the symbolic mysticism which Blake preferred to systematic rationalism, Swedenborg developed a system which could be reckoned with in terms of his own inherent principles. But mystical symbology has no such coherence, its strange pictures being erratic, lacking system, and hence, devoid of a criterion by which to test its relation to reality.

The Spiritual World

It seems unnecessary to compare Swedenborg's idea of the spiritual world with the various recent views which have ended in agnosticism. The current discussion is often left at the point indicated by Evelyn Underhill in *The Life of the Spirit in the Life of Today*, in which the

author contends that as a discussion of our bodily senses explains nothing about the universe by which our senses are impressed, “so all discussion of spiritual faculty and experience remains within the human radius and neither invalidates nor accounts for the spiritual world.”⁴²¹ From this viewpoint it would be said that Swedenborg’s analysis of our spiritual senses is very far from accounting for the spiritual world, but leaves us within the confines of his experience here in the world. The primary difficulty, so Underhill maintains, is due to “the inevitably symbolic nature of the language which we are compelled to use.” We are left, therefore, with transcendent intuitions to be worked up in symbolic form, unable to get outside of ourselves, so to say, to compare our symbols with spiritual reality. It would be easy to doubt that the spiritual world, as thus described, really exists. We would be left with psychological relativities as our sole resource. Hence, the significance for devotees of the system we are expounding, of two decisive considerations: (1) the revealed Word as the standard, and (2) faith produced in us to give assent to the Word as true, because Divine. The seer’s “dictate” afforded the illuminative clue to be followed, avoiding the dark recesses of psychological relativity and agnosticism. The result is reinforced confidence that (1) the spiritual world is real, contiguous with the natural world; and that (2) we have sure knowledge of its structure as objective. We are therefore in a position to discriminate between symbology (subjective, illusory, or infected with falsities), and a system of thought which uses symbology as an instrument, capable of consideration apart from the subjective factors of the personal equation.

In a review of a recent Swedish work by Martin Lamm,^{***} on the development of Swedenborg into a mystic and spirit-seer, Rev. Hugo L. Odhner^{†††} points out that the attempt to

^{***} Martin Lamm was a professor of literature at Uppsala University and authored a biography of Swedenborg in 1915.

explain away Swedenborg's spiritual world as "subjective" must reckon with the fact of "the unique case of a rational man, for thirty years seeing a perfectly ordered universe."⁴²² To try to show the seer's mental evolution, as if Swedenborg's own early ideas generated his later views in their entirety, apart from any two-world experiences, would be to ignore "the Divine beauty and perfection of the doctrines [and] the convincing cohesion of its philosophic truths with all the facts of every field of life." The working out of the Divine providence in the destinies of the human race is also ignored. The laws of the allegorical interpretation used by Swedenborg are not merely "lax and loose." Instead, the reviewer presupposes the Divine truths which the letter of the Word was "constructed to contain and express." Granted the realities and truths of the spiritual world, we have then what the reviewer calls a "Divine logic," as the "fully patterned" actuality which took shape in Swedenborg's rational understanding. Prior to his illumination, Swedenborg was in the stage of doubts, tentative theories, and hesitation. "In the *Arcana* and the works which follow it, this confusion disappears. . . . The functional relations of all truths are suddenly clarified, the revelation is publicly announced with a sure pen. . . . Inspiration thus supplied a formative Divine soul by *involution* or *influx* into Swedenborg's mind; and his own personal opinions, as well as the current ideas of the world of his day, were the matrix and nutritious fluid from which the body of revelation was built up for presentation to the natural world." Only on such a basis can one account for the intellectual "evolution" which a work like Lamm's undertakes to explain. With some reservations, we may accept this criticism as moving in the right direction.

Kant and Swedenborg

^{†††} Hugo L. Odhner authored *The Human Mind: Its Faculties and Degrees: a Study of Swedenborg's Psychology* (1969), and *Spirits and Men: Some Essays on the Influence of Spirits upon Men, as Described in the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg* (1960).

The first thinker of note to grapple with certain of Swedenborg's teachings was the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, in his *Dreams of a Spirit-seer Explained through the Dreams of Metaphysics*, 1766. This work is on the surface so hostile that it is customary in some quarters to class Kant as an enemy, as if Kant had no ground for interest in another world. But the adverse judgments passed on Kant are due to those who know little about the aims and methods of the critical philosophy. Kant came to see that man lives a sort of double existence, a temporal existence in the world of sense as a part of nature, and a transcendent or timeless life in "the intelligible world." Consequently, Kant was interested in the report of Swedenborg's seership in the instances which were well known in Kant's day. His half playful, half serious work on Swedenborg gave him an opportunity to assail metaphysical thinkers whose systems were (to him) mere dreams. The serious thought in it is that spirits belong to the intelligible world, in which they are related to one another in a super-physical way by spiritual laws—laws which are not subject to the conditions of space and time. The skeptical thought turns on the probability that imaginative products of a diseased brain are projected into the supra-sensible world. Hence, Kant is able to treat derisively any fantastic metaphysical theory claiming objective validity. Philosophy should, then, be cautious about speculations which pretend to transcend experience. Whether or not Swedenborg possessed powers of a higher sort enabling him to see events at a distance, for example, the fire in Stockholm, which he was reported to have seen by inner vision while it was in progress, is not a matter which can ever be settled by mere reasoning experience is necessary. (Here Kant is on sure ground.)

Immanuel Kant's interest in Swedenborg was coincident with the development of his theory of the ideality of space and time, a theory which more closely resembles the doctrines of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz than any views Kant found in Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia*. To

understand the relationship of Kant and Swedenborg is to note, for one thing, the dissimilarity of their interests. Kant is concerned with rigidly severe limitations of reason within its own field. An immaterial world might indeed be real. Spirits might be real, and they might communicate. But on the hypothesis of apparitions, as illusions of the imagination substituted on our part for the real spiritual influences, the critical philosopher would be concerned to press his objections to the limit.⁴²³ Doubt is possible so long as we consider the hypothesis that the recipient of visions may have clothed his impressions in symbolical conceptions and fantasies, as indeed, the dreams of metaphysics may be the creations of a disordered brain, localized in a theoretical world.

What Kant undertook to do for our knowledge of nature, Swedenborg did for our knowledge of the spiritual world; and there is no excuse for confusing the typical interests of these men. Kant believed he had written the introduction to all future systems of metaphysics by analytically disclosing the structure which the human mind brings to experience, to make experience and knowledge possible. So it might be said that Swedenborg wrote his introduction to all future systems of psychical research, religious science of the spiritual world, and all psychologies of two-world experience. No one could verify by experience Kant's conception of the mind insofar as the mind is regarded as prior to all experience. No one is in a position to test what is prior to our seer's doctrine of knowledge, save by putting it in relation to other systems. As Kant wrote in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, so we have in the present system the critique or exposition of the spirit which makes all spirit functions possible, on the human side, and will make possible our existence after death. Here, Swedenborg appeals to revelation, his dictate, and the results of his scriptural studies in a region far removed from Kant's interests. Kant was perfectly right as far as he went. While we remain at the standpoint of natural experience, there is

no escape from phenomena and Swedenborg would say that too. We cannot, as it were, leap outside of our skins to compare our inner knowledge-states with things-in-themselves.⁴²⁴ So our seer would have said: we cannot lift ourselves out of the knowledge-states of the first rational to know spirit as such, to know the spiritual world since there are too many degrees between. But granted acceptance of revelatory insight, adopted on what Kant would call faith, the whole scheme of things is differently envisaged.

Forerunners of Swedenborg

With reference to biblical interpretation, it is interesting to revert to the period in actual history when philosophy had displaced the ancient myths in the minds of Greek thinkers, who, in the fifth century, B.C., took up the custom of construing the myths allegorically, notably the myths of Homer. The Cynics undertook to reduce the allegorical interpretation of Homer to a system. The Stoics developed this method still further; and Zeus, chief among the gods, was identified with the Word (Logos). In the first century, B.C., this way of interpreting also influenced Judaism and, with the commingling of Greek and Jewish thought in Philo's time, the implied point of view became more general. Thus Philo, informed in scriptural and philosophical thought, sought still more persistently to reduce allegorical interpretation to a system. Philo regarded this allegorical exposition as the "soul" of the sacred text of the Bible, the literal meaning being its "body," subject to absurdity through misinterpretation. Thus, the tree of life was said to represent the fear of God, the four rivers of paradise were the four cardinal virtues, Abel was piety, Cain was the egoist, and Enoch was hope.

Interpretation of this sort received its great impetus in early Christian times from Origin, who undertook to supply a scientific basis. Scripture, as revelation from God, is distinctive in

character, containing Divine truth in unity and fullness. The Word of God cannot be untrue; it contains no errors or contradictions. The Author of Scripture is *one* throughout; in all portions of the Bible we have the same Book, a perfectly harmonious instrument. It is a question, then, of the spirit and the letter. The spiritual significance is attached to the fact related which, in turn, is figurative or accommodative, while embodying Divine principles. The Scripture must, then, be interpreted in a manner worthy of God as its Author. The literal sense (the “flesh”) must not be adopted when it would entail anything impossible or unworthy of God. The literal sense is the obvious sense in which, for one thing, there are historical impossibilities. For example, there could have been no days before the creation of the stars; there are precepts not to be literally followed. It is the spiritual principle or “soul” of Scripture which runs through the various books. Scripture, in this sense of the term, was written by the Spirit of God. The real world is the spiritual reality behind the visible world. Jesus Christ is God and Man: at the resurrection His humanity was given the glory of His Divinity and is no longer human but Divine. From Him there began the union of the Divine with the human, in order that the human, by communion with the Divine, might rise to the Divine. Origin also held that the Divine Word slumbers in the hearts of unbelievers, while it is awake in the saints. The spiritual meaning of Scripture is unknown save to those endowed by the Holy Spirit with wisdom and knowledge. But the principle of interpretation, once understood, this mode of construing the Bible is brought within the reach of all, spiritual exegesis being needed to disclose the typical meanings.

Later still, Eucharis maintained that every individual thing in the text has its definite meaning. Thomas Aquinas distinguished the “historical” from the “spiritual” sense, while Luther called attention to the “literal” sense. What kept the principle of spiritual interpretation from further development was the coming in of Protestant dogma. The biblical criticism of the

eighteenth century put an end to allegorical exegesis among scholars. With emphasis on textual and other errors and human limitations, it became increasingly difficult to believe that we have one consistent Book, with one Author.

Another line of forerunners might be traced from the time of Plato, who, envisaging the soul as existing between two worlds, distinguished between sense-knowledge and enlightened reason culminating in insight into the Good as the highest principle of knowledge. Plato was the forerunner of those who have sought to carry reason as far as possible in the spiritual life and the “intelligible” (spiritual) world. In the long period between Philo and Thomas Aquinas, we find thinkers who assigned the superior place to spiritual intuition, the beatific vision, Christian doctrine, or the Word (in contrast with all philosophy as naturalistic). In Augustine’s system, the points of resemblance to that of Swedenborg are more numerous than in some others, for example, Augustine’s emphasis on the will and the state of equilibrium between two loves, two worlds; also the elaborate explanation of what occurred when man, abusing his freedom, lapsed from his pristine purity and laid the basis for evil heredity which underlies what Swedenborg called “proprium.” Various leaders taught that the Lord is the sole source of goodness and truth, that the Trinity signifies three functions of the Divine nature (not three Persons), that Christ had two natures while in the world, and that salvation after death is limited. It is customary among followers of Swedenborg to pass by teachings which may have influenced him in the period of his illumination, while making much of his scientific works as forerunners of nineteenth century science. Thus, it is pointed out that mathematician and astronomer Pierre-Simon Laplace probably derived his nebular hypothesis from Swedenborg, by way of French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon. Swedenborg seems then to have given the central clues for modern evolutionism. Yet, if his was essentially a cosmology of *creation by Divine involution*,

we would look to Swedenborg's predecessors, not to the evolutionists, to find points of resemblance. So, too, if we were to seek out those writers who have come closest to Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences we would note writers like Jacob Boehme (1575-1624), whose *Signature of All Things* is based on this same principle, by appeal to such terms as "receptacle" and "container" in case of man, the microcosm, corresponding to the universe. But the present writer's position is that one should *determine Swedenborg's psychological type* before trying to explain his intellectual conversion.

Addendum

[The material that follows was found in Dresser's archival material alongside his manuscript on Swedenborg's psychology. Although there is an indication that the materials were intended to be included within his manuscript, the author gave no hint as to where he intended it to be placed. Accordingly, it is here being provided as an addendum distinct but related to the above body of work.]

The Meaning of Inner States

Interest changes almost insensibly from the description of inner states to their spiritual meaning. We often make the transition in daily speech without noting the fact that we are passing moral judgments. As unwittingly, we observe that people who are drawn together in groups acquire a sort of “sphere” by which we signal their unity. So, too, we are impressed by what we call an individual’s presence, bespeaking, it may be, the sweet serenity which rests upon the brow, the kindliness or gentleness of manner which wins instant response on our part. By contrast, we are repelled by persons whose presence indicates a radically different mode of life. However far short of spiritual perception our impressions of character may be, we quickly recognize qualities like sincerity or beauty of spirit as opposed to mere conventionality. We signal those whose utterances “ring true,” who set the standard of directness, those who live by principle with the courage of their convictions.

A merely mental state, such as a sensation of resistance or hardness when we strike against a tree, implies existent things round about us which are undoubtedly the same for all, although we are mindful of what deafness and blindness does to some people, also noting how limited life is for morons and imbeciles. A moral state, however, is personal, entailing matters of conscience and goals to be won by rejecting what is wrong in favor of discipline for the individual and rightness of conduct in behalf of the group. By a spiritual state we mean very much more, one that enlists personal and social life in fullness, passing beyond morals into the field of religion; hence, it is known by its quality. Such a quality is far from being an assemblage

of emotions filling the mind at the moment, as pleasures or thrills come and go. We know perfectly well that happiness cannot be achieved by merely adding experiences one to another. So, the more our interest increases in behalf of the fullness of life, the more we pass beyond mere appearances and sensations intimately akin to the body to the thoughts and responses which accompany them, thus, to the mind as the meeting-place of inner activities; and, by right instruction, to the soul as the interior self.

As natural beings, it is, indeed, true that we exist for “food, clothing, and shelter,” working exercising, and resting as members of a biological world, more like animals than heirs of immortality. Most of the time, we judge by material values, as if there were no security save in money and physical prowess. In our day, especially, it is customary to call attention to the behavior of the body, equipped by instinct for competition and survival, not far above the cave-man in desires and emotions. Hourly we are reminded of all this, by the press, the radio, the realistic novel, the gangster film-plays, and all the other devices which hold us down to the level of sense-imagery. Surely, what ordinarily passes as psychology suffices for the description and explanation of all this.

The result, at times, is an attempted isolation of this, or that, phrase of human nature as if it could be reckoned with by itself. So, we hear about glands of internal secretion and energies set free by anger or fear. Indeed, some specialists assume that people can be remade by extracts poured into the system, as if the will no longer played a part in regulating human conduct. Again, the test is found in the degree of intelligence or in complexes hidden in the subconscious, notably in instances when inferiority or depression sets in, when anxiety is rampant or great bugaboos called phobias keep us from standing on high places, make us afraid of crowds, and otherwise limit our conduct. It is well to bear all this in mind in our endeavor to be true to the fullness of

life as the saner guide to psychology; for many are tempted to believe that this realism is enough, that we no longer need the moral lessons of history, that we need not search the Scriptures to learn the ideal destiny of man. Everywhere today, it is a question of what is measurable, reducible to statistical types; quality seems almost to have been forgotten. Yet, quality is to occupy the foremost place in every chapter of our study.

By way of intensive contrast, once more consider the Sermon on the Mount as a discourse on inner states in two groups: those that run amiss and are wholly unfavorable to the spiritual life, and those that yield harmony and inner peace. Under the first head is the lust of the eye, for example, and what it tells us of the man behind, of the typical evil implied, and of the fruits of such behavior. Then there is hatred, the type of all disturbing emotions that are socially hostile and close the door upon heavenly life. But love leads to the straight and narrow living which is the way of heaven. Plainly, every incentive or motive becomes intelligible only so far as discerned *in relation*. No emotion is sundered from either its sources or its results. The same clues could be found throughout the Gospels, thus, in the Book of Life as a whole. Actuated by inner states like enmity, bitterness, revenge, and jealousy, man is endlessly misjudging others while tacitly judging himself, always ready to admonish others by offering to cast the mote out of their eyes, while obstinately refusing to admit the existence of the beam in his own eye. Stirred into self-defense, man retreats into a private world of his own making whose center is the ego: subtle, sly, aggressive, and giving vent to his desires without discipline. Quickened by a love which is Divine in origin, or led through his understanding by a wisdom which is also Divine, man as steadily pursues the opposite course, responding to the states which favor spiritual living. Assuredly, the life which we call “mental” and which is all the while going on

amidst this well-nigh endless contrast is only the lesser part of this vital interplay which enlists man's whole being for better or worse.

In brief, the Book of Life in which all our members are written, already contains the Divine psychology which is essential to any adequate human psychology, and is as precise as thought dependent upon mathematics instead of on spiritual qualities. Even the veriest "hair," the least "iota," or the last "farthing" is significant. In this scale there is no such thing as compromise. "No man can serve two masters." "As a man soweth, so shall he also reap." Good and evil do not blend, although the good can conquer the evil. They are as distinct as light and darkness.

Much depends on recovering sharp distinctions which have been blurred in our day by reducing all contrasts to the minimum, as if everything depended on magnitudes and other mechanical standards to the disadvantage of qualities or ideal differences. In truth, the finite is unlike the Infinite in degree. Man, although a child of God, is not identical in substance with Him, does not shade off into "oneness" with Him, like colors in the spectrum. Differences signify more than resemblances. The spiritual life is a grade higher than the natural and is not developed out of it. In the universe at large, all is gradations, descents and ascents, in which no distinctions are lost. What is, thus, true at large, holds true in minutest detail. Hence, the reasons for giving acute attention to the inner life with respect to motives, conditions along the way, and the consequences that ensue.

We might prefer to pay little heed to our thoughts and feelings in the light of their meaning. So, we might join the vast multitude of pleasure-seekers who live by impulses of the moment, restlessly doing one thing after another as if there were never to be a day of reckoning.

Again, nothing might seem more real at first than the private world of our own thoughts and emotions, together with the beliefs in which we were reared. In childhood, we acquired a design for living, a training-formula, and we tend by habit to continue as we began. It seems incredible that we must begin the serious quest for truth by inquiring into fallacies of the senses and falsities infecting our creed. It is an easy matter to assume that man is a law unto himself, that he can do as he likes without paying a price unless, by chance, he is caught and penalized under the civil laws. People readily believe in our day that psychology is enough, ethics and religion being survivals from the age preceding our sophistication. Hence, those modes of living which were once called “morals” are now said to be matters of taste, thus, even conscience of the sense of moral obligation seems to be outmoded.

Our doctrine shows us, however, that not even the simplest act is performed without relation to affections in which we have become confirmed, affections which, in turn, imply what we love most, and thus bear relation to our inner history back to earliest childhood, also to the issues which are deciding our future from moment to moment. It makes a vital difference whether or not we look, first of all, to the affectional life stirring within us, whether or not we exalt man unduly as if in such a study as this he were independent or divine. To cherish the notion that we are originators of the power which we seem creatively to use, would be to lapse into misconceptions at the outset, in contrast with the truth that we are, at best, sharers of energy or power from the one Giver of life.

Everything in our experience seems, indeed, to center about the ego. In a sense this is a vitally significant fact. For self-importance projects its influences into our life in all directions. In our pride or vanity we are gratified that this is so. No investigation of our emotions could advance unless we realized that *emotion* is closest to us, even closer than desire or imagination.

Yet, even in these the most intense of our personal moments, we are reactive rather than creative, responding to events and things around us, to states uprushing from within, to the behavior of people whose contacts touch us to the quick or inspire us to cooperate instead of trying to manage them. If, then, our upbringing has permitted us to be competitive or assertive rather than to prepare for what in this doctrine is called “the life of charity,” we need to correct our attitude both in our daily living and in our quest for truth. Since “love is the life of man,” it is impossible to separate these two enterprises and attain our goal.

In the schools we were taught to educate the intellect or understanding. Then, we were supposed to enter “the age of reason” at eighteen, or thereabouts, and adjust ourselves to man in all spheres of his activity as if we had only to appeal to his reason. But, now we are beginning with the central truth that Love as Divine is first in order, then Wisdom; and so, in us, first love with its attendant affections, then intellect or understanding. It follows that what we think or believe is confirmatory, not paramount, as many hold who, beginning with self-analysis (as intellectual), and venture to develop a complete psychology out of the finite self, substituting humanism for belief in God. It also follows that will coincides with what we love, and that the affections in general agree; hence, that there is a sequence through all the desires and strivings in which this the emotional side of our nature takes precedence. So, having started aright our whole study proceeds *from within outward*, beginning with Divine Love in the heart, and extending to what is outermost. This enterprise is very different from any study which starts with external facts and then proceeds by inference, as if groping from appearances to reality, from man to God by magnifying human traits as in the ancient days of myth-making.

We are also to be concerned anew with the age-old issue of the connection between spirit and matter, mind, and brain. Is it really true, we ask afresh, that the behavior of the body is

decisive? Is the mind conditioned or determined by the body so that our conscious life is an effect like a shadow? Or is the body “mere obedience,” regulated through the mind, which in turn, is less influential than the spirit? Our doctrine discloses evidences that the last statement is the true one. There is, indeed, an interplay or activity between mind and brain. But neither one is the *cause* of the life we know within, neither one is the efficacy, all real efficacy being Divine through what is spiritual into what is natural. Correspondence between soul and body, not the so-called dependence of mind on brain is, thus, our clue. For the moment this is a mere assertion, preparing us to begin aright. But, it is profoundly important since, in turning first to the sphere of sense-perception, to consider the elements of mental life one by one, we shall not be misled by appearances.

Our attention is, of course, as forcibly directed to the behavior of the body as if we agreed with the viewpoint now known as behaviorism. For inner states are incisively portrayed by what the body does, though not caused by it; for example, when anger sets in, when fear blanches the cheek, when humility touches the face with gentle mien, or love’s tenderness infills the mother’s devotion to her child. How very unlike are the bodily expressions and affections which these activities represent! The two are never identical, yet they correspond by a relatedness which proves to be a universal principle. Mind and brain function together in the most intimate relation conceivable, point by point, but neither blends with nor becomes the other. That is one of the reasons, as we shall see, why quality, not quantity, is the test; degree, not sameness; resemblance, but not oneness of substance. Yet spirit is also substance, enduring in quality. We, as individuals, differ in quality, despite the remarkable resemblances which unite us in social groups. These qualities, in their highest significance, are invariably from within and above, as well as the two principles, influx and correspondence, which make their relationship intelligible

as Divine in origin. Each of these principles needs clarification by first noting in detail what is elemental in this inner life of ours which so often seems like a miracle.

Our existence does not, then, center about our environment in the physical world; not around our bodily heritage from our parents; nor about those matters so readily construed by reference to “luck” or “fate,” as if we were creatures of circumstance. Nor can we truly affirm that every influence upon us from the outside affects our status as human beings. The world around us is enormously complex. The spiritual life is profoundly simple, so simple as to be easily missed amidst the fallacies of the senses, the falsities of misguided belief, and the subtleties of self-love which are oftentimes exalted to the first rank.

As already suggested, our affections are reducible to two types: love of self and of worldly power, and love toward the Lord and the neighbor. Our real status depends on what is centrally in process in this antithesis in terms of our prevailing love. Appearances afford no complete principle. At best, they are signs or symbols only, like words in a text in which the letter may kill, while the spirit “giveth life.” It is easy indeed to misconstrue, to project what we misread and, thus, to become literalists when we open the Book of Life.

We emphasize the fact that this study does not begin with self-analysis, as if we could start with mental states and build up a world of ideas to mount to the skies. Man is held in equilibrium between loves for a Divine purpose, and his position in life is not wholly intelligible from any other viewpoint. But this does not mean that the larger part of his life is unconscious or subconscious as these terms are now understood. It means, instead, that he is related to all mankind in both worlds that, as a spirit, he is already a denizen of the spiritual world ordinarily called the future life. All that is hidden from us, so far as experience is concerned, becomes

intelligible in time by extension of the same principles which interpret his life as a natural man. We are minded then to be as thorough as possible with respect to the daily activities by which we are surrounded, supplementing what is at hand by appeal to goods and truths from spheres beyond our ken so far as our own perceptions are concerned. We are minded, also, to look progressively to these heavenly teachings, as our investigation ascends; and to be willing to look to ourselves in keen self-examination, since the life we live is the test, rather than the doctrines we believe, but in a measure hold in suspense because we do not see into them in fullness.

It is possible, to be sure, to test these teachings in a measure by appeal to direct experience. Most of us could readily verify the foregoing description of the inner life as a succession of states in endless change, the present growing out of our past and leading to our future, while we react to what is happening to use. What is new to many is the way experiences are set in order in their universality in such way that the spiritual life is more real through its meanings and truths, implying Divine goods and truths, than our sense-impressions and the appearance that we are mere bodies with a mind dependent on the brain. Plainly, there is a cardinal difference between states which make us aware of things and events outside of us, and the play of feelings and thoughts within us. But, as surely the states of affections which most absorb us are different from this the stream of sense-impressions which acquaints us both with events around and with what is going on inside. We need hardly be told that there are private sentiments which we scarcely ever acknowledge to any one, as well as conflicts or frustrations which stay with us for years. So there is very much that needs only to be stated to be verified as true or real. So, we are already prepared in some degree for truths concerning what is so interior, so near the secret place that we find no end to our inmost thoughts. Hence, we are ready to

advance from what is within us as a “state,” to what is above us as a law, and thus, to its meaning in the Divine purpose.

Despite the limitations of our thought, therefore, and the fallibility of our judgments, we are often close to great truths in some of our impressions, both of ourselves and of our fellowmen. Detecting what is superficial in the people we meet, what is assumed for the time being in order to conceal or to mislead, we proceed with some assurance to interpret moods and dispositions, mental types, and modes of social behavior. Experience has, indeed, made us cautious about reasoning by analogy. We discern excuses and fancied explanations. We realize the truth of the familiar saying that “language was given us to conceal thought.” Yet, we know a few people well enough to see to some extent how all could be known. Some people are so genuine in their dedication to what is worthwhile that they exemplify ideals for us. “As good as gold,” we say, “As solid as the hills.” Again, we remark that while some are emotionally immature, others have in a measure attained the balanced life, and are far more nearly integrated than the average. We see certain truths so clearly that we even venture to prophesy that this or that individual will refuse to learn life’s great lessons until something exceedingly potent occurs to stir the inner process to the depths. Although righteous judgment belongs to the Lord alone, some judgments are certainly in the true direction, thanks to truths instilled into our minds in childhood. What the Lord sees in us assuredly includes the spiritual status which is intimately related to the soul. Tacitly, we are even now apprehending much that happens to us in accordance with this, our status howbeit, we consciously lack the doctrine which shall show why this is true. For some of us, at least, it is not too great an act of faith to believe there is a teaching which, in marvelous exactitude, could clear away every mystery and disclose the path of the soul into the endless future which is growing out of this the boundless present. Our first great need is

to keep as close to life by appeal to these our greater moments, while also frankly acknowledging our entire dependence on the goods and truths of heavenly origin without which we could not make even this persistent effort to discern life in its pulsations close at hand.

Yet, while the influent states thus rich in meanings and values give us subject-matter for thorough study, there is reason for turning first to the type of experience which most surely puts us in contact with the tangible world of things. Obviously, we need not try to prove that the objects around us in space are “there” for all men, hence, that nature is convincingly *real*. Nor need we demonstrate that consciousness exists, and with it the “self.” We *start* with mind and matter in relation, thus, with the plainest facts of sense-impressions; or, more accurately, with perception.

To begin in this way is, if you insist, to make an abstraction which seems to contradict the foregoing appeal for starting with the whole, with the universe, the two worlds and, thus, with the Lord as Creator and Sustainer. But in thus singling out one aspect at a time of the inner states which are in incessant flux in our minds, we are endeavoring to be true at one and the same time to these inner states *as experienced* and to the doctrines which disclose these states in their meaning. Thus, even the simplest facts of mental life have a twofold significance. The Divine psychology is essential from the first, if any human psychology shall become adequate. We would be dealing with an abstraction only in case we depended on analysis and inference, in which case we would be left in the endless relativities of a stream. To find what is constant or absolute at any point is to begin with it, to be taught that the real efficiency is the imbuing Life which is taking a certain course through us. In short, it is the Divine influx that gives; man, at best, is a recipient so formed as to respond in will and understanding to that influx. Yet, even as thus inseparably or incessantly with us, the Divine influx does not dictate what we shall believe

or that we must believe. It is as much a part of our inquiry to withhold assent if we do not clearly see, as to follow the exposition of truths divinely given. This is why we have called the present enterprise a study or investigation. Response to these truths will, in time, yield their own evidences, with an increasing perception *that they are so*, that they are touching the heart and clarifying the daily life, bringing unity out of complexity, and peace where was perplexity before. “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.”

Series of Inner States

The term “state” is definable with reference to the mental event which corresponds with the passing event or process in the brain going on at the same time. A state is a unit or single item regarded in relation with other states, one of which we experience apart from this, the mutual relation of states in a series of events. It may be as brief as a single flash of insight which is gone before we even try to isolate it, or, it may continue for a considerable period under the dominion of fear, envy, jealousy, hatred or suspicion, that is in an emotional context. Our states are both transitory and permanent, that is, relatively permanent; and either general or particular. The general state may be prevailingly good, hopeful, and optimistic; although the particular state on a certain day may be discordant or pessimistic. The particular individual states are related to the general state or condition, and the complete description of a man’s status at a given stage of his development would include all the factors characterizing his real life at the time; thus, his real status would consist of spiritual rather than merely mental states. Thus, his real status is known to the Lord and the Divine influx is conditioned by it. Indeed, whatever influence enters man’s life is necessarily determined by his spiritual rather than his mental states: his degree of openness or resistance, the interior responses he makes to what affects him inwardly. Furthermore, the Lord appears to everyone according to his inner status.⁴²⁵ In general, whatever is brought into the inner life by influx is received according to the individual’s state. To judge one’s conduct with reference to the ends pursued by it, would be to begin by considering the various states in which one, then, is making due allowance for the fact that the states vary according to the perception.⁴²⁶

All states have their periods, their beginning, successive progress, and end. A “full” state is an entire state from beginning to end with reference to all its increasing and its maximum. The end of a state of conjunction is the beginning of a following state, which is one of separation. The states of life vary in general according to the affections. That is, there are changes of state in successive ages: in infancy, childhood, maturity, and old age; also during and subsequent to regeneration. The former things are left behind when a new state of life is put on.

There are, in general, two states, one of good and one of truth, which serve as standards by which to estimate other states. The former is a state of being, the latter a state of manifestation. We are apt to think of changes of state as successive in time and space, but this reference to goodness and truth shows that the changes are to be regarded by appeal to principles. In reality, neither time nor space can be predicated of the interior principles in man—called “states” for want of a better term. The changes do not occur in time or place, but when the mind changes in its affection and derivative thoughts. In the spiritual world this is plainly seen; since changes of state in a continual progression from one to another is characteristic of life there. Thus, in the interior heaven, there is no idea of interior and exterior; instead, there is an idea of the more or less perfect. All motions and progressions are changes in the state of life. No one state is exactly like another to eternity. Nor does one spirit or angel pass through changes of state like those of another spirit or angel.⁴²⁷

Prior to regeneration, man’s changes of state are inconstant, as his mind fluctuates upwards or downwards. But when man suffers himself to be regenerated, the changes are continually being carried upwards and, hence, into more interior heavenly societies. When a man is strengthened in the goods of faith and the goods of charity, he is introduced into other states.

The former states, then, serve as a plane for the following state, and so on continually. The states of regeneration are truths and goods and their conjunction.

Evils and falsities cannot be removed and goods and truths put in their stead, save by many changes of state. Spiritual states, in general, contain “infinite things,” and every phase of a change also. In a “full” state, the change is such that nothing is lacking for receiving the influx of innocence.⁴²⁸ A state is not yet full when truths have not yet qualified good, to make it capable of receiving a corresponding state of innocence. The state of means to end is entirely different from the state of the end. So, too, the external or natural states are always to be distinguished from the spiritual state which is peculiar to the internal man.

Man’s first state (innocence), followed by a state of light, is, in turn, succeeded by a third in which man begins to love self and the world; in his fourth state (because of his externality), man cares nothing for truths but denies them. These correspond to states of the Church.⁴²⁹ Thus, the same principle holds throughout. Even among angels, there are changes of state according to changes in interiors; for angels, as well as men, desired to be in internals at one time and in externals in another. Man’s changes in the interior depend on the variations of intelligence and wisdom, varying from the innocence and ignorance of infancy to the state of wisdom and innocence therein of old age. The first lasts while the interiors are being formed; in the second, intelligence has not yet begun to be present; in the third, intelligence appears; while in the last, the will to live by truths and goods is paramount. Through this succession of states the wise man sees the marvelous operation of the Divine providence by means of prior states as planes for those following.

Man is able to turn either to the Lord (by aid of the Church, worship and the Word), or to himself. Hence follow the typical changes of state. To turn to the Lord, for example, is to be put into the state known as “illustration,” or inward perception of truth.

Every state which man enters from infancy to old age remains with him, and returns in the other life, exactly as those states had been in this world.⁴³⁰ Thus, not only the goods and truths of the memory but also the states of innocence and charity persist. When the states of evil and falsity occur, these are tempered by the Lord by means of the good states. After death, everyone’s state of life at first is such as it had been in the natural world. Man then passes through a state of his exteriors, one of his interiors, and then one of preparation. All these occur in the world of spirits. The first state in which a man is in, the condition he was in here lasts with some for days, with others for months and, yet, others for a year, but rarely longer. The time depends on the agreement or disagreement of the interiors with the exteriors. At first, man is not aware that he is attached to a society. Therefore he goes hither and yon.

Since in the other life all conditions with man are known and, hence, are to be classed as changes of state (not as conditions of space and time), we might well learn to think of the spiritual life here and now as a series of states, paying less and less regard to a person’s chronological age. There are several clues which might be followed. The series from infancy to old age is one. The states pertaining to love to the Lord and the neighbor involve another series, which we may contrast with their opposites. Then, there are states prior to regeneration; and those, at first involving reformation, lead to those germane to regeneration and thence to man’s life after he is thus born anew with respect to his will. Thought “with the spirit” is here the guide. Thus, “state” is predicated of love, wisdom, affections, and their derivative joys; also of goods and truths in general. All these are above or out of space; *states of love* may then come to the

fore instead of space, and *states of wisdom* where we once thought of time. States of life, in contrast with days, months, and years, are thus values or meanings. Furthermore, affection and thought, charity and faith, and will and understanding are states of self (or subject of knowledge and experience). Hence, they are substances, spiritual realities.⁴³¹ So, too, man's three states—damnation, reformation, regeneration—are states of advance in which each depends on man's exteriors and interiors, and on time and place.

Goods and truths as apprehended by man vary in each man through the changes and variations of the forms of the mind.⁴³² Every change and variation of the human mind, change and vary something in the series of things present and consequent. Thus, affections are changes in the purely organic substances of the mind, while thoughts are changes and variations in the form of those substances. It follows, that memory is the permanent state of these changes and variations. We, then, understand why it is possible for man to retain what is essential to character and wisdom. Since the spiritual state of man is his state after death, in contrast with his state in this world, regeneration belongs essentially to the spiritual world.⁴³³ So, too, the joys of heaven are not those of "place," but of man's state of life from love and wisdom. In this as in other respects, there is a state which induces the form of man's interiors. To say that a man's life changes, is then to say his form has changed.

The successive states cannot be identical with one another because no two things are identical in the universe. The changing series involves both a change from a past, to a sequent state that is different; and a perpetual change of form, especially in internals. Again, the states of life change with marriage, especially, when there is conjunction of minds through true marriage love.

The changes of state incidental to reformation and regeneration are states of full freedom because man then acts from the rational principle of his understanding. So, too, in a state of actual regeneration he is in a like freedom. But he then wills and acts, thinks and speaks from a new love and a new intelligence from the Lord. Hence, the psychological differences between reformation and regeneration is that (1) in the first state, the understanding acts the first part, and will the second; while (2) in the second state, the will acts the first part, the understanding the second—understanding from will, not will from understanding.⁴³⁴ The prime reason is that the conjunction of good with charity and faith, and of the internal and external man, can be effected in no other way.

From infancy to young manhood, man passes through a whole period or series of states classified as “humiliation” before his parents, and as “information” by his teachers; but he then enters a state in which he becomes his own master. Man’s mature spiritual state is knowable, in part, in relation to his situation in the Grand Man. Thus, the description of man’s states is another clue to the type of his love and its accompanying affections; with the sphere in which these affections find their field of expression; all spheres change exactly according to the change of state. Spheres, states, and affections implied a change of state, and the functions which the ruling love implies, gives us a way of envisaging the spiritual life as a whole at any given level of development. To picture these states and processes without lapsing into spatial and temporal imagery, is to see many intimate points of correspondence between man’s life on earth and his life in the heavens.

Inner States

II

It is plain that some people merely let their minds rehearse the details of recent experiences, notably at the end of the day before sleep comes, when it is easier to follow what simply crops up into the field of attention, than to consider what happened that was really meaningful. That is to say, there are states within states. Some are as insignificant as the merest feeling that might be either bodily sensation or mental good feeling. Others, such as joy in its uplifting radiance, might seemingly go up and up to the heights of spiritual perception, as a progressively enduring state uniting the spirit with what is heavenly in origin and type. What many of us yearn for is the incoming of states of the spirit which will more nearly insure our relation to what endures, what is permanently worthwhile, in contrast with the transitory nature of the day as it merely passes.

The word “state” is marvelous, then, in two of its meanings. As part of a process which flows on like a river, it makes or leaves the impress of the moment, whatever its quality, a moment of peace it may be. A state, as such, thus passes and gives place to another immediately, since no experience, *as merely felt*, lasts long. But, within the transient, may well be a sense of the permanent, suggesting the constancy of faith, a love that abides through every vicissitude, reminding us perchance of a great scriptural sentence such as the outstanding text from the Old Testament: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusted in Thee.” As transitory states remind us of *time*, enduring ones immediately suggest

eternity. A merely temporal event is not, in itself, blessedness. Nor, is the mere contemplation of what is happening in the natural world, sufficient for our enlightenment. To emphasize, time might be to dwell on what was least fortunate in what was then passing. Some individuals actually live in what took place forty years ago. Thus time spells bondage. But, to rise above time in its limiting sense, is to remember that the same spirit has lived through all the years insofar as its gifts were more than the impressions of the moment. We forget time when enlightenment flashes upon us. Time hangs heavily when we fail to understand. It passes joyfully when we are living amid experiences that disclose what is worthwhile and when we are doing creative work.

By a spiritual state is meant very much more, therefore, than the mere assemblage of feelings and thoughts of the present moment, some of which may be filled with misjudgments, others being “mental” only, not by any means spiritual. As one learns to look behind nerves to mind, so, too, one can look behind thought and feelings to spirit. As the art of living in the present rather than the past (with regret), or in the future (with worry), the productive present in which one lives is more and more a spiritual present. Hence, there is a world of difference between “abiding” and simply “passing through.” “Abide in me, and I in you,” is henceforth, the great utterance. The mere past seems like the branches that, failing to bear fruit, have been cut down and cast into the fire. Indeed, the natural man himself with his gossipy allegiances to the past and the hearsays of the dawning future is such a branch so far as real value is concerned. “If a man abides not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.” But “If” (note the magic word) ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”⁴³⁵ Here we may interpret “my words” to mean those transfiguring truths which, kept in the heart, generate spiritual states that give constancy, peace, and the faith that never wavers.

Read the Sermon on the Mount with inner states in mind and you will find that there are two groups of states. First, there are the detached states, which like the lust of the eye, like enmity, bitterness, revenge, jealousy, and lead a person into the pit of hatred. Then there are states typified by love that lead to “the straight and narrow way” that is the way of heaven. The former states are mental, and psychology describes them for us, for example, in what is taught concerning the emotions. The spiritual states exemplify what is right and fine in the divine order. Actuated by states of the first series, a man is forever misjudging others by tacitly judging himself, always ready to correct others by offering to cast the mote out of their eyes while refusing even to admit the existence of the beam in his own eyes. Yet ever at hand is the light, the love, and the wisdom needed to lift him out of his self-centering bondage.

It is, of course, a commonplace that personal experiences are met and measured by the state the judging person is in. But it is easy, indeed, to miss the point. Sometimes, however, there seems to be no escape from the mere flux of sense-feelings, pleasures and pains, thoughts and mental pictures connecting the fleeting present with the waning past and the oncoming future. In the rapid movement of the time being, it is futile to try to substitute a better inner state for all that is fleeting, as if there were nothing more to the inner life than desire, for example, or emotion, or belief. What is mentally given to us is complex in content and rich in possibilities, and we find it necessary to take up the phases of our inner life one by one. Probably, what we most desire to intercept is what comes to “defile” a man, such as the inferior desires which a man would rather not own as his. To apply the great Sermon is to realize that only, little by little, can a person detect what is negative or defiling. It is so easy to project onto others what rises into activity that it is no small matter to catch “in time” the unworthy desires which must be valiantly confronted and overcome.

By the time we have counted ten on our wrath, the wrath has changed. One needs the idea or picture of a successfully offsetting incentive to action, as in recalling the presence of a person who is exceptionally calm, at peace with the world, and poised. We need a goodly degree of self-knowledge to know when to withdraw an adverse record, so to speak, and put on that what is favorable to the Divine order as we understand it. A new picture or idea must somehow fit your present state of development, since we move forward from where we are (favorable or unfavorable as this status may be) to what is in process of coming next. For our states of development *move in a series* which has many more relationships in correspondence with it than we ever grasp at one time.

We often classify people by these relationships. We remark that such a one is immature because of being held back by an over-influential person, by being shut-in, reticent or timid, self-righteous or narrowly conscientious, or failing to learn by experience and otherwise lacking in the keen self-scrutiny which other persons use to great advantage. Some we call un-quickened. Others, we say, stand in their own light. Still others are, in some respects, “dumb” and unresponsive, as if they needed to be stirred to the depths by providential experience. Again, we have at least a general idea why people are actuated by a ruling passion, by typical moods that come and go like the weather. It is plain that a change of environment or occupation would not suffice to arouse those who are thus tied down. The actual status with the self is the decisive factor, as we repeatedly observe in the case of people who meet any situation in just their way. As we shall see more plainly in our continuing study of inner states, man is not merely a “creature of habit,” as habit is usually understood; but through what *confirms* a person in ways already determined by self-love, by the “sphere” of influences amidst which he lives.

Inner States

III

We find no reason in our study of inner states for discounting the states that are in process within us so far as those continue in the direction which is to lead to bettered relationship with the Divine influx. Oftentimes, it is “the little things” that count. Spiritual states that endure until they become momentous may well prove cooperative. Sometimes we grow most when least aware that we are making progress. When an interval has come and gone, we find that we are more nearly at peace, more willing to have things come in the order of divine providence. So each aspiration may help. Yet, we need something more: stability, and the constancy of faith which unifies the states that have proved helpful along the way.

In fact, we realize after inquiring into these matters that, every now and then, experiences occur that may be described as tests of the state of development that has been wrought in us. We have seen people round about us who were all at sea mentally when they lost their job and their money. Having no basis of security other than money and an occupation, they were utterly lost at first. Then worry set in, followed by fears. Then the nerves responded, with notions concerning nervous disease. This sequence from discouragement, inferiority, and lost morale, to disturbances affecting the organism as a whole readily follows. Plainly, what is needed is a more deeply founded basis of security in a spiritual state which no financial upheaval can upset. So, the recourse is always the same: from appearances to the realities of divine truth, with faith in the perfect love which casts out fear.

The outlook is reducible to two types of love: love toward God and the neighbor, versus love of self and the world. All mental states thus regarded are related to what we love, the standard being the spiritual state which implies inwardness at its best. By contrast, natural-mindedness is fostered by affection for external things as supposed ends in themselves. There is no such entity as self-love apart from affection for the things that sustain it. Trace these states to their source and you will find the *self* that confirms the interests, attitudes and beliefs which keep the love in question active. But granted a change of attitude through uplift of mind and heart into love for God and the neighbor, then, the inner states will take their cue from the love which then prevails.

A man may try to serve two masters (loves) at the same time. But inner conflict will follow. Actually, he will invariably love the one rather than the other, and the love that is served will all the while draw to itself the inner states which sustain it. He who does not yet believe that a law or principle is involved will have the benefit of experience to convince him when the time comes.

Looking at these matters in a more specifically doctrinal way, we note that an inner state is definable as that inward activity in which a thing is, so long as the thing continues under the given conditions. Thus a man may be for a considerable period under the dominion of fear, envy, or jealousy, emotionally speaking. Our states are both transitory and relatively permanent; and either general or particular. The general state may be prevailingly good, hopeful, and optimistic; although the particular state on this or that day may be discordant. The particular and individual states are related to the general state, and the complete description of a man's status at a given stage of his inner experience would include all factors characterizing his life at the time: his real status would consist of spiritual rather than merely mental states. This, a man's real status, is

known by the Lord alone; the divine influx is conditioned by it. Indeed, whatever influences enters a man's life, is determined by his spiritual rather than his mental states: by his degree of openness in contrast with any resistance that impedes the Divine influx. Furthermore, the Lord appears to everyone according to his status.⁴³⁶ In general, whatever is brought into the inner life by influx is received according to the individual's state. But this statement remains merely general unless we take account of the preceding particulars.⁴³⁷ We also note the fact that inner states vary according to the perception.⁴³⁸

All states have their periods, their beginning, successive progress, and end. A "full" state is an entire state from beginning to end with reference to all its increasing and its maximum.⁴³⁹ The end of a state of conjunction is the beginning of a following state, which is one of separation. The states of life vary, in general, according to the age or stage of development, in particular, according to the affections.⁴⁴⁰ That is, there are changes of state in successive ages, for example, infancy, childhood, maturity, and old age; also during and subsequent to regeneration. The former things are left behind when a new state is put on.

The two general states, one of good and one of truth, serve as standards by which to estimate other states. The former is a state of being, the latter a state of manifestation.⁴⁴¹ We are apt to think of changes of state as successive in time and space, but the reference to these two states shows that it is a question of principles not derived from space or time. In reality, neither time nor space can be predicted of the interior principles in man: the changes do not occur in time or place but when the mind changes its affections and derivative thoughts. In the spiritual world this is plainly seen; since changes of state in a continual progression from one into another is characteristic of life there. Thus, in the interior heaven (as the doctrine explains), there is no idea of interior and exterior; instead, there is an idea of more or less perfect. Here in the natural

world, you and I might well make use of this concept since it is a far more intelligible way of putting the matter so that we may lessen our bondage to time and space and mere “things” in space.

States of Experience

I

The idea that man passes through successive stages of experience from infancy to old age is very ancient, although the age assigned to each epoch or phase differs according to the general view of life. Thus, many centuries B.C., Confucius is reported to have said: "At fifteen years I longed for wisdom. At thirty my mind was fixed in pursuit of it. At forty I saw clearly certain principles. At fifty I understood the rule given by heaven. At sixty everything I heard I easily understood. At seventy the desires of my heart no longer transgressed the law." At eighty Victor Hugo signalized such epochs by saying that there had been four Victor Hugos in him. "Life begins at forty," was for years a famous saying, from a book under that title by W. B. Pitkin, a highly intelligent psychologist.^{***} Many writers have assumed that an age of wisdom begins about sixty, extending into the old age of men celebrated for wisdom in ancient Greece.

It has long been a conviction that man's later life is determined by his first seven years. So, educators and religious leaders have claimed that, given a child's first seven years, the rest will follow according the truths that were grounded in those the critically formative years. Other leaders have emphasized the receptivity and spontaneity of early childhood as clues to the existence that could be heavenly in type if these values were progressively conserved.

^{***} Refers to Walter Boughton Pitkin (1878-1953) of Columbia University, author of the self-help books *Life Begins at Forty* (1932), and *The Psychology of Happiness* (1929).

In the doctrines, the successive periods are reduced to four. The first state (innocence) is followed by a state of light, which is succeeded by a state in which man begins to love self and the world; while in the fourth (because of his externality), man cares little for truths of the sort that lead heavenward. Man is introduced into a state of innocence soon after he is born, and this state serves as a plane for the succeeding states.⁴⁴² Innocence, in its best estate, is intimately allied with charity, love, wisdom, and good, innocence being the “essential” of regeneration: the “true innocence” which dwells in wisdom,⁴⁴³ and is classed as “genuine” because, as internal, it is “of the mind itself” in relation to will and understanding; and is contrasted with the “innocence of ignorance” in man’s first state of development as an infant before he advances to a higher plane of activity. This first state of man extends from birth to his fifth year.⁴⁴⁴ It lasts while the interiors are being formed as essential to the stages of activity that are to follow.

Two salient ideas, then, are to be kept in mind if we are to be guided by the principle implied: the interiors are decisive, and yet innocence is more than a clue to ignorance as popularly regarded. Even among the angels, there are variations of state according to changes in the interiors. Man’s changes in his interiors depend on the variations of intelligence and wisdom from the innocence and ignorance of infancy, to the state of wisdom and innocence therein in old age. The first lasts while the interiors are being formed; in the second, intelligence in the higher meaning of the term has not begun to be present; while in the third, intelligence makes its appearance: and innocence continues as essential to all good, innocence in its fullest state being acknowledgment that all good is from the Lord.⁴⁴⁵ This, the higher state of innocence, is twofold, for acknowledgment concerning the source of all good and all truth is also the crucial realization that, from oneself alone, one wills “nothing but evil” (namely, the fruits of self-love). This, the decisive acknowledgement is *from the heart*, and nobody can make it in all sincerity unless

“conjoined with the Lord through love.”⁴⁴⁶ Even the act of will in making this the decisive acknowledgment is, in its very inception, from the divine implantation indicated by the foregoing. The innocence of childhood which we praise when delighted by it, is, of course, only the innocence of ignorance as external in comparison with the innocence mentioned above as “genuine,” “true,” and *internal*, hence an essential all the way along. In common speech we make no such distinctions. The tests of intelligence which we hear so much about in our day are concerned with mathematical measurements, thus, with quantity rather than quality. Plainly, there could be no test of ignorance, innocence, or intelligence as the terms are used in the foregoing; since externality is judgment from below or outside. But, insofar as a person is put into the state known as “illustration,” inward perception of truths and goods clarifies these matters.

Spiritual perception of the successive states in their epochs or stages from infancy to old age is possible, however, because every state into which man enters in the age-series remains with him, not only “here,” as we say with reference to our present existence in space and time, but *returns in the other life* exactly as these states had been in the world.⁴⁴⁷ Thus, not only the goods and truths of the memory, but also the states of innocence and charity persist. When states of evil and falsity occur, these are tempered by the Lord by means of good states, as we shall see more clearly when considering falsities and fallacies.

By learning to think of man’s life as a series of inner states continuing from the natural plane to the spiritual, and then into the other life with nothing lost that is essential to true understanding, we may pay less and less attention to the chronological age which means so much to us here below, and endeavor to think *with the spirit*, in accordance with the meanings and values of existence as it passes. Dispensing with the idea of “time” or “age” as decisive, we may

envisage the whole series of states from infancy to old age, *not as temporal*, but as a series, as in noting what follows from love to the Lord and the neighbor when internal changes make this series possible. We have all met men and women in their fifties, sixties, seventies, or even their eighties, who have not yet begun to enter the *series* in question. Or, we have met young people in their twenties who are already “old in wisdom.” Thought “with the spirit,” is the ideal guide in these considerations: a “spiritual idea” derives its whole content from a spiritual state—not from inferences or reasonings as current in everyday thinking. A state in such meanings of the term is predicated of wisdom, and love with its allied affections and derivative joys; thus, with goods and truths in general. All these are above or out of space: *states of love* being thought of instead of space and *states of wisdom* where we once thought of time.⁴⁴⁸

States of Experience

II

The fact that states of life remain with a person as values or meanings, in contrast with the months and years of the individual's personal history, is brought to the fore anew in the advisory activities which, today, are the best opportunities for knowing people. Affection and thought, charity and faith, will and understanding, as *states of the self*,⁴⁴⁹ seem to be in the past when people under advice are asked to recall whatever experience has made a deep impression. But actually the memory, association, mental picture, shock or disappointment which appears to have acted as a cause in the past, is remembered *in the present*, so far only as the present throws light on what is called the past as a matter of convenience. To remember a failure in meeting a decisive is, for most of us, to realize what we might have done. So, in retrospect, we create as it were, a new experience by introducing from the present the moral and spiritual lessons which we might have learned, but did not. Unwittingly, we vary or color our narration by what we believe and feel today. Thus, we tell the sort of biography that we would like to have people accept. The experience that stirred us deeply years ago is with us in such force that we cannot help vindicating or improving on it as if it had just happened. Time is naught. The emotion that struck home is deeply vivid. What we need is the enlightenment or understanding which penetrates what was obscure in memory and is so surely a present possession that we *now* see with unmistakable clarity what we could have seen *then* had we grasped today's insight. We do not, then, actually return to the past. We do not recall an experience as a recovery of the past. The

past, as such, is gone forever. But the impressions it laid down are with us as inner states, thus, as subject-matter for interpretation as if time had never intervened at all.

Goods and truths, as apprehended by man, vary in each man through the changes and variations of the forms of the mind.⁴⁵⁰ Every change and variation of the state of the human mind, change and vary in the series of things present and consequent.⁴⁵¹ Thus, affections are changes in the purely organic substances of the mind, while thoughts are changes and variations in the form of those substances.⁴⁵² It follows that memory is the permanent state of these changes and variations. We then see why it is possible for man to retain what is essential to character and wisdom. Since the spiritual state of man is his state after death, in contrast with his state in the world, regeneration belongs essentially to the spiritual world. So, too, the joys of heaven are not those of “place,” but of man’s state of life from love and wisdom. In this, as in other respects there is a state which induces the form of man’s interiors. To say that a man’s life changes, is to say that his “form” has changed.⁴⁵³

The successive states cannot be identical with one another, because no two things are identical in the universe. The changing series involves both a change from a past to a sequent state that is different; and a perpetual change of form, especially in internals. Again, the states of life change with marriage, especially, when there is conjunction of minds through true marriage love.

The changes of state incidental to reformation and regeneration are states of full freedom, because man then acts from the rational principle of his understanding. So, too, in a state of actual regeneration, he is in like freedom. But he then wills and acts, thinks and speaks from a new love and a new intelligence from the Lord. Hence, the psychological difference between

reformation and regeneration is that (1) in the first state the understanding acts the first part, will the second; while (2) in the second state the will acts the first part, the understanding the second—understanding from will, not will from understanding.⁴⁵⁴ The prime reason is that the conjunction of good and truth, charity and faith, and of the internal and external man, can be affected in no other way.

From infancy to young manhood, man passes through a whole period of states classed as “humiliation” before his parents and as “information” by his teachers; but he then enters a state in which he becomes his own master. Man’s mature spiritual state is knowable, in part, in relation to his situation in the Grand Man (to be considered in a later study). Thus, the description of man’s states is another clue to the type of his love and its accompanying affections, with the sphere in which these affections find their field of expression; all states change exactly according to the changes of state. Spheres, states, the affections implied in the changes of state, and the functions which the ruling love implies, give us a way of envisaging the spiritual life as a whole, at any given level of development. To picture these states and processes without lapsing into spatial and temporal imagery, is to see many intimate points of correspondence between man’s life on earth and his life in the heavens.

The relation between love and its allied affections in such series as we have been considering, becomes clear when we note that love, as the central motive, carries affections with it in a certain direction. Thus, love toward the Lord and the neighbor sways the attendant affections in an upward look or outgoing attitude; while self-love either turns within in self-centering affections, or towards the world with a desire to control people and amass wealth. When our attitude is affirmative towards spiritual living, we look up and out in hope of aspiration; when our attitude is negative, we draw in, closing the door even upon friendly

influences. Kindred thoughts and sentiments, in either case, combine to produce their own field, which projects itself into the larger field of its corresponding social relationships. This projective power, with its coloring or determining emotions, is especially noticeable in commonplace experiences like an outburst of anger, an enveloping fear; when the atmosphere is “blue,” the inner world being tinged with this emotion or darkened by fear. Our projected states constitute a kind of fourth dimension, a little world which is so real for us while it fills our horizon that it is almost like a world of spaces or distances.

Spheres

I

As odors surround a plant indicating its genus or species, so spheres of love or faith manifest the quality of the spiritual states from which they spring. So, too, the individual, as a whole, is surrounded by a sphere, to which the several factors of his inner life contribute their share. This sphere exhales from various sources, for each plane has its states of affection, its type of life or thought. A man's sphere, in part, manifests his interiors: his type of charity and, in part, his exteriors. Naturally there is a wide range of spheres, from that of a heavenly type of love to a sphere of the vilest hatred. Although imperceptible as such to the dull and unresponsive people of the world, a man's sphere will make itself acutely known to a sensitive person. The ideal instance is perhaps that of good-will, sending itself forth from a warm and loving personality with a radiating presence, as if in welcome to the whole world.

What is obvious in the ideal case is true in all cases. Some kind of sphere goes forth, some presence exerts an influence, either overt or so nearly imperceptible, that its effect is produced, howbeit this influence may be attributed to other sources. The influence of a subtle sphere has been compared to the combined effect of little particles which, emanating from material objects, are too small for the eye to discern, particles which are essentially the same in nature as the objects themselves. The atmosphere surrounding an object, too subtle to be detected by human senses, may manifest itself to the acuter senses of an animal. So, too, a dog will scent his master's sphere in the print of his shoes long after the tracks have been made; so, too, dogs are sometimes employed to track fleeing criminals or other unknown persons by aid of an object

to which remnants of the sphere are attached. What is required is a sensibility acute to detect this emanation or sphere in a given case. We may picture the sphere surrounding a person in terms of emanations capable of being felt but ordinarily classed as an “unconscious influence,” notably in instances of infatuation where bodily attraction is effective under the guise of what passes as love. To detect these personal spheres, in their fullness, would be to determine the planes from which they emanate, to identify the ruling affection, and know how and why it is influential. Thus, we would understand a “magnetic personality” and more keenly realize why we like to be in the presence of some people, and why we are repelled by others.

In any event, that which actually rules a man is sent forth in his sphere, although its quality may be far from obvious, save in those instances where a man is admittedly absorbed in what is of advantage to himself, or where one who is admittedly innocent or genuinely devoted to goods and truths from heavenly sources. Good spheres, with their accompanying affections, are a protection against evil: evil spirits cannot stay in the sphere of an angel. But there are as many spheres as affections and their combinations; hence, some are less distinctive.

A sphere, in general, is a man’s image extended outside of himself, an image of all the qualities and principles in his makeup. Thus a sphere may signify self-excellence, or super-eminence in authority, in the case of men high in rank. But, in persons gifted with faith and charity, the sphere of authority is united with the good as the central factor, which makes the relationship distinctive.

Another factor in spheres is the massing of principles and persuasions which enter into and condition the intellectual life in relation to truth and falsity. The denser the falsity, the darker the sphere. Other spheres express credulity as a characteristic attitude. Still others show that all

benefits are limited by relationships coming within the range of the bodily senses. Thus, materialism has its distinctive sphere as we note in people wholly given over to worldly possessions and pleasures, mostly of the sensuous type; and in the materialistic conception of history on which present-day communism is based.

Spheres of fantasies appear like clouds. People who are actuated by hatred and revenges, exhale spheres colored by these intense emotions. We might compare a personal influence of this sort with the intense hatreds festered in some of the nations in World War I, when the “Hymn of Hate” brought these matters to a focus. Granted great numbers of people who resemble one another in their beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, and affections, we have what has recently been called “the soul of a people,” and in others terms, “group” or “mob” psychology. So, too, groups of strikers generate their sphere. It does not follow, as some have assumed, that there is a “group mind” as a separate entity. Instead, individuals of like interests function with one another in response to a leader who sets the example, puts forth the ideas or propaganda which the members of the group are to promulgate as if they all agreed in terms of one slogan: “Down with capitalism,” in their hatred of America or Great Britain.^{§§§}

To be guarded against, therefore, it is the falsity that all members of a group, such as an assemblage of strikers denouncing their employers, are alike in the sense assumed by those who believe in a distinct social mind. There is, indeed, kinship within the group. Thus, a leader may sway a mob as if it were one person. But the more we know about the individuals constituting the assemblage, the more reason for avoiding a sweeping conclusion. Some members of the group are sure to be dissenters. All have their own opinions. The differences are smoothed over

^{§§§} Dresser was probably referring to the group psychologies such as those found in Gabriel Tarde’s *Les lois de l’imitation* (1890); Gustave LeBon’s *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (1895); Wilfred Trotter’s *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* (1914); and William McDougall’s *The Group Mind* (1920).

for the sake of a common cause. So, in a group of worshippers, allied through acceptance of a creed, there may well be opinions shared for the sake of worshipping together, while the participants repeat in common a ritual not by any means critically examined to see if it contains fallacies. We note such a sphere, for example, in a group repeating the Apostles Creed, in contrast with a group in which no creed is recited, or one in which the central interest is in the mass. In some churches, it is the emotional sphere that most impresses us as observers. But, as critics, we would like to see goods and truths put before rituals taken on by habit. Outstanding in quality is a sphere in which right doctrine of the Lord prevails. Each participant can then contribute in entire sincerity.

Spheres

II

In the spiritual world, all thought is communicated by a sphere which manifests both will and understanding. Conjunction with others is affected by these spheres, for spheres of thought and affection mutually communicate themselves according to “presence.” He who has been given over to hatreds, revenges, adulteries, avarice, deceit or luxury, is encompassed by a foul sphere which at once identifies him with what is infernal. Those who have taken delight in benevolence, charity, and especially in love to the Lord, are encompassed by a grateful and pleasant sphere pertaining to heaven itself. All these spheres are perceived from the loves and derivative affections acquired in this life.

The objective which determines a man’s life also determines his sphere. Thus, a spiritual or celestial sphere identifies a man with his particular heaven. The universal heaven is in the sphere of ends. Whatever reigns universally with anyone, produces its sphere. We may, then, in principle at least, trace a man’s sphere to the faith and love he manifests and, thus, to his central purpose with reference to his work in the community, his dedication to service, and so to the heavenly society to which he belongs.

Seen from the spiritual world, there are many spheres surrounding a man—some from the spiritual world, agreeing with his interiors, through which he is in a society of like affection; others, less spiritual, are more characteristic of the natural world. Thus, a certain sphere accompanies one who is passing through temptation. Whatever is clothed for use in a lower sphere, is covered by things pertaining to that field of activity. A pure sphere is capable of

receiving a thousand-fold more influence than a gross one.⁴⁵⁵ Since the sphere which exhales from a man is from his whole life, it includes every sort of state, even his diseases with their unclean states. When a man draws an evil to himself, he acquires a sphere of that evil; this, in turn, enables evil forces to adjoin themselves to him, so that as his sphere is reinforced, the evil increases from more to more. So, too, when an accident happens, it is because the sphere of spirits in that evil have gained dominion and learned how to produce that misfortune. On this basis, crime waves would doubtless be attributed to the spheres of evil spirits, reinforcing the lawlessness and other evil deeds of men on earth.

All thoughts and affections enter the society with which they agree. This is plain in case of dense spheres in which are sensual spirits, in contrast with the purity of angelic spheres. Man's endeavor in relation to both heaven and hell may be, in fact, described with reference to the groups of spheres to which his affections correspond. This is another way of saying that, both in general and in particular, man is held in equilibrium between heaven and hell. So far as his spheres are concerned there is nothing hidden—to those who have open spiritual eyes. Whatever a man has thought, spoken, or done, is thus made manifest. His persistent belief discloses itself as surely as his prevailing love. His dominant love especially makes known the extensiveness of his sphere in both quantity and quality. For our encouragement, it is important to realize that a good sphere so extends into heaven that good spheres there conjoin, this confluence of spheres being the basis of conjunction with the Lord.⁴⁵⁶

Then, too, each province in the Grand Man, or Humanity, in its spheres of goods seen as One Man by the Lord, has a different sphere; so far as man is in heavenly affection, he is already in one of these spheres. Otherwise stated, the conjunction and basis of all things in heaven is through the sphere of divine goods in the spiritual kingdom. Love more fully constitutes the

whole man in heaven; the derivative sphere of life flows from him like an exhalation or vapor, which may be compared with the effluvium around plants and animals.⁴⁵⁷ This effluence around a man forming his sphere, is communicated and transferred to others, and received by them according to their love. Thus, there is a complete inter-relationship of spheres in the two worlds, between the two worlds, all this mutuality being in accord with the principles of correspondence.

This doctrine of spheres puts special emphasis on what is really decisive in man, in relation to manifold influences of which people in this world are obviously unconscious. The good man, deeply responsive to Love and Wisdom, allied with a society in the spiritual world, is more widely influenced than we supposed. So, too, evils due to self-love are more infernal because of the aroma or sphere emanating from and attracted to them. Although unaware by actual perception of the presence of a heavenly sphere, by aid of this doctrine of spheres a man may picture himself amidst heavenly influences reinforcing his efforts towards goods and truths. Moreover, by doctrine a man may realize that he is in a divine sphere proceeding from the Lord in its perpetual endeavor to save all mankind. This is the way divine providence operates—never in a purely general way, as some have fancied.

We may, then, make our imagery vivid by comparing the divine sphere to the warming and illuminating presence of the sun. The sun of the spiritual world is like the sphere which encompasses each angel, and by which he is presented.⁴⁵⁸ Heavenly spheres mean radiant presence. The sphere around the Lord is the sun for all the angels. From this central Light as the starting-point, the sphere should be envisaged as less and less bright, down through the scale of thin flame, gross fire, bright cloud and black cloud, to spheres in greater and greater contrast to the sun. On our part, the beauty of the response may best be described as the delight which these heavenly spheres arouse. The delight of the affections accompanying a person is, in brief, the

atmosphere pertaining to the dweller in the spiritual world. Again, the spiritual sphere which proceeds from the Lord may be characterized as that of a universal sphere of marriage love. This is another way of characterizing the Divine providence.

Since Divine Love is known from its sphere pervading the universe, we have a way of suggesting at least what we feel when the Divine presence seems unutterable. Indeed, we may attach this imagery to all the general principles and significant spiritual states previously described. All sympathies, in contrast with all antipathies, become the more vivid when we put the facts in terms of spheres. We, then, see anew why good and evil cannot mix. To feel the sphere of life pouring forth from a man's native disposition would be to know his real type, even before coming into his visible presence.

Negative States

In the days when people still believed in just one devil, in the fall and original sin, depravity of will, or an element of radical evil in human nature, it was a fairly simple proposition to “explain” negative states. It was expected that everybody would be sinful. Even the body was discounted as replete with sin. And there was always *hell* as another generality looming like a darkly spectral cloud to frighten even the innocent. But with penetrating psychological knowledge breaking in everywhere, all such generalities waned as if dispelled by a morning sun of heavenly enlightenment. When human nature was looked at from a first-hand viewpoint, no baneful instinct, trend, element, or quality was anywhere to be found. Instead, *misuse*, as the only demon, was brought into the limelight; that is, the emphasis formerly put on this or that factor, such as the will, was transferred to any *excess* in utilizing activities thoroughly good in their appropriate places, as in case of the instinct for self-preservation, necessarily intensively strong to insure survival as, indeed, the sexual instinct had to be strong to a remarkable degree to insure the perpetuation of the species.

Hatred and anger in primitive guise perhaps came nearest to unqualified evil, for it is these emotions which intensify the antagonism that keep people imposing themselves on one another. Yet, not even the ego is evil in itself, although self-love, as it is called, may well be the most disturbing expression of our nature. Self-centeredness, however, is rather a phase or stage of experience to pass through, not a fate-driven in-turning activity which we are bound to be conditioned by. Hate, fear, rage, and sex as primitive emotions akin to animalism, are active in a

social context, and are not intelligible when abstracted from a living *whole* of composite motivations. Nothing classed as “according to nature,” is evil in itself. Excess, as the real villain in the play, is always a given state within a given individual, as conditioned in a particular environment with this or that inheritance, and where each factor of the situation is analyzable. What we need to know, then, is John Doe in just his social milieu or Ellen Doe in hers. Individuals are born, not as if created “free and equal,” not as if reared in equality and freedom, but as conditioned from the start in a context of forces of varied sorts, differing from others in mental type, disposition, intelligence, in early training, and so on. Hence, only relative judgments are feasible in terms of “aspects,” “phases,” and inner states of development differing from person to person. John Doe and his mate are not, then, intelligible in isolation or abstraction. They are not intelligible as conscious beings alone, but as more subconscious than conscious; thus, as creatures not of habit, but of circumstance. Each individual, ostensibly behaving as a unit, is actually a whole personality behaving from a complexity on different levels, apparently as body only (at times), as mind only (at other times), or as partly awakened spiritual beings aware of heritage of a very different kind when compared with the social milieu. But, in any event, man is essentially *a social being*, not an animal only, not a mere body. In some respects, obviously enough, he is an animal trying to be wholly human, standing upright and using his powers to full advantage. He is undoubtedly handicapped by biological forces striving for supremacy.

But “the flesh,” as an abstraction, is no longer to be blamed as the source of negations. Blame is a strange word to apply. The fact is that, at any given moment, man behaves as actuated *at that moment* by the strongest motive at the threshold of consent. Far from being “depraved,” his will is given him for selection and readjustment. It is possible to become so keenly aware of

the contest of motives that, by easing up here and accentuating there, later results can be planned for by beginning far enough back so that, when the psychological moment comes, another and higher motivation shall have come into control. Although instinct-driven while struggling with a power-drive, we *can* become self-directed in behalf of higher ends or goals. We need not be solely driven by what, as creatures of habit, we have been. We can begin anew with a fresh combination of activities that have been long in process. But we need to know ourselves on all levels.

There is theoretical value in coming as close as we can to sheer determinism if not fatalism. For we need to know and frankly to acknowledge that, at the time in question, actuated by certain states, we conducted ourselves precisely as we did *because so actuated*. At that moment, we could not have behaved otherwise. For the stream of cause and effect is relentless. We are necessarily sowing and reaping. We necessarily reap as we have sown. We carry with us the accumulations of past sowings which the Orientals call “karma.” We tend to repeat even our mistakes. We are not compelled to learn anything. But experience, as described in classical terms, also “teaches all things.” We can, by beginning far enough back, change the combination. For, we are as much actuated by what we are drawn *towards*, as by what we are driven *into*. Our natures, at their best, work for ends, values, goals, and thus for ideals which, as Plato long ago made plain, constitute an order of reality beyond that of the dream-life in which most of us are striving to put things over in our own way. We belong much more to the ideal order than to the lower level where, as biological entities, we strive and strive in a succession of inner conflicts. Conforming, first in spirit, then in thought, in mental imagery, in uplifted feeling, in heart-felt response, we can live more and more as true sons of God born for victory, despite all the trends that drag us down towards defeat. So, heaven and hell are in part of our own making. In

equilibrium between the two trends, we can go up or slump down. To go up is to be affirmative, free, ready to do the work that is most fitting in the Divine economy; to drop down is to be negative, hence, more or less imprisoned, mayhap discouraged or over-tired, depressed, ready to “throw up the sponge.” By beginning far enough back, we can select means to ends. That is what the will, once called “depraved,” is for. Its selectivity is marvelous in extent and power. In some respects, it is the person, the self we know at heart who should be activating sons of God. Motivations, like habits, are for our use. The psychological moment is not fate-driven. What we shall do is not written in the book as Allah’s will. But we need to *realize* our freedom.

The difficulties we meet when trying to define what is negative are due in part to the fact that we do not know *at the time* all the factors at work. People judge one another un-righteously because they judge by appearances under the terms of a superficial conventionality amidst which extremely few people are free. We can neither catch ourselves nor others at the psychological moment when the issues are shaping up for a decision. Most people are either impulsive, habit-bound, or bound by social pattern of this or that restraining type. Very few are genuinely spontaneous. So very few are wholly sincere, and many are masqueraded by the disguises which they choose to put on. So, only the expert could tell how they are actuated. With us as observers, meanwhile, we do as well as we can by looking back to see what might have been. Knowing that most troubles are caused by interference, I might well pause before I act. If I acted impulsively, I have much to learn. If I judged others before correcting myself, I have still more to learn. I might have weighed by words, but I did not. I might have “counted ten” before giving way to my wrath, but I failed to do so. I could have tried non-resistance instead of “talking back” or arguing in self-defense. In any case, it is now my privilege to learn the unwelcome fact that I acted as I did *because* conditioned as I was *at that time*. If some other conduct is to proceed from me in the

future, I must be reconditioned by paying more acute attention (some of the time) so that I may act more wisely *some of the time*, while at any time I am likely to be habit-bound. When I acted in such a way that old-time doctrinal people would have said my conduct was sinful, it was because neither I nor my critics saw the whole picture. That is to say, the significant feature was and is—ignorance. In ignorance we were born. In ignorance we have been brought up. In ignorance we have been gradually awakened into partial knowledge. When immersed in processes and conditions we as easily become negative in attitude, outlook, thought, feeling and conduct as people who are over-fatigued and depressed, or otherwise ill and downcast.

Disturbing self-consciousness is often negative to an extreme. But lift your thought above the narrows through which you are passing, as if down deep in a grand canyon, where only a tiny stream is visible, and you can give yourself to ends, goals, meanings, values—the values we try to live by. See what a process or condition *means*, why you are submerged, and you will begin once more to live for the idea or truth, not for its semblances. Naturally we feel cramped when down under. Who wouldn't? Naturally we feel shut-in whenever-conditioned by the brain, the body, the nerves, our moods, and thus, our negations as opportunities for becoming self-knowing. Knowledge of a condition or limit always implies knowledge beyond it. If we were not far more than we seem to be when imprisoned we would never be able to come to ourselves at all. A limit shuts you in if you so regard it, unmindful of the great truths of our spiritual selfhood. Limitation is not sin, as some have said. As finite, we must be in some sense limited. How else could we fulfill our parts as “members one of another,” each with work to do, each making a contribution? Our negations, then, are incidental. They do not change us as sons of God. Every negation implies its positive. This is true even of such negative emotions as regret, shame, guilt, or self-deprecation. When we cannot yet see all the factors at work in our present experience, we

may well seize upon a certain one or two, like choosing a road verging from a highway to see where it leads. Faith is given us to act upon. Discouragement is out of place—a negation passing judgment on a negation. Submergence is probably the worst. Try to remember, when submerged, how you felt when free. Make full allowances for fatigue, hunger, sickness, your nerves, or whatever else you may discern in part. But remember the fact of relativity, hence of temporary limitation due to this or that short-sightedness. Conditions of mind limited for once by body and brain, nerves and moods, can be offset by the states of mind which occasionally break in like wisps of sunlight on a cloudy day. We can learn to know these intrusive conditions and make allowances according to the degree of concentration, control, and detachment which we have gained.

But not so simple is the discrimination between love and sex, with the tribulations we are under while trying to understand what portions of our daily existence are due to the body, what to the brain, the passing stream of mental states, and the intimations from above and below of our larger selfhood. Wishful thinking readily works into this complexity, as if we had already attained what does not come into power until years of experience have made their contributions. The higher our standard of purity, freedom, and the kind of affection which puts love of God and of our fellowmen first in rank, the keener the contrast when our endeavors fall short. The acutely self-conscious, conscientious individual has to make many allowances, reminding himself every now and then: “This is my ideal self-speaking . . . *that* is due to the conditioned phase . . . and again, *this* my present condition is a mixture due to the social atmosphere in which I am trying to find myself as more than a creature of habit and of my environment.” We are advancing meanwhile by contrasts and dualities. Unless we were sometimes on “the top wave,” we would not know what it means to be down under. If we can catch ourselves, even momentarily, well

and good. “This,” we say, “is the game of conventionality people are playing, always amidst masquerades, seldom saying what they really think or feel; acting from surfaces as if there were nothing to us save shadows. But within and above is Reality, the divine presence, with wisdom and love ever at hand. All that really matters is what comes forth from above and within in accord with the purposes of the divine order. Let me not mistake the shadow for the substance.”

Two aspects of what we call the past are outstanding: our recovery of the best and our recollections of the worst, or most negative. Thus idealism and realism compete. The duality of self enables us to detect dualities in others. We need not be snowed under. Life takes on conditions and gives itself processes. Both are means to ends beyond what merely appears. Each person’s existence is, in some sense, a process taking on conditions. But within each is a trend towards freedom, fulfillment, thus the satisfaction that comes from being “members one of another.”

What now shall we say about people whose beliefs and comments on the world are negative, perhaps as steadily one-sided as Russians who acknowledge no alternative? There are dozens of reasons for being opinionated, one-sided, autocratic, or dogmatic, from heredity to an adverse environment, or unfortunate upbringing; impeding illnesses and accidents; contacts with surly bosses and other maladjusted persons who impose their woes right and left; and adverse systems in the spheres of politics, the church, and so on, where kings will be kings, and queens insist on being queens though without a kingdom. Priest-craft breaks in, also negations like communism and atheism, with the “religions of authority” struggling against the “religion of the spirit.” The given individual whom we find most difficult may have a grudge that struck home long ago and became a habit. A psychological clue is discoverable in many of these instances by noting the fact that, when negations predominate, people are actively *emotional*, or they are like

the Sophists of old who when good reasons failed, changed the subject and went off into emotional side issues that had nothing to do with the topic at hand. Such emotionalists abound in public life as well as in issues between Protestants and Catholics, Jews and Gentiles, Northerners and Southerners. That is to say, those who are not sure of their ground, lapse into emotions while trying to make good. Eccentricities intervene. Single-track minded people fall back on notions which they have never scrutinized. So, it is easy to be arbitrary, prejudiced, if not hypercritical. If your interlocutor would only come out into the open and lay all his cards on the table, you would know what to do or say. But the age of reason has not yet dawned in the field of radical partisanship. Hence, the current saying, "Nothing is so dangerous as a half-truth," because, on it, people rear their fallacies and negations. Once started downhill into a falsity or fallacy, it is easy, indeed, to become confirmed in what was mistaken for truth. Probably the most widely current falsity is the habit of generalizing on the basis of two or three instances or items (possibly only one). Meanwhile we take people as we find them. Nobody likes to be told he has a grudge, is one-sided, or is confirmed in half-truths.

To become completely emancipated from negations, a person has to find a way to take the news of the day, much of which is concerned with accidents, murders, political maneuvering, and scandals. One may of course choose between a newscaster and commentator over the radio who does his best to tell what has happened without bias, and one who is so apprehensive that a person might well expect the world to go to ruin tomorrow morning, or the one who mingles prophecies with vicious attacks on fellow commentators. Then, too, there are a few periodicals devoted to things worthwhile rather than to bald realisms of the yellow journal sort. Present-day fiction is apt to be realistic to the limit, with now and then a novel or short story that touches the heart. The arts, especially music, must indeed portray what is currently active, as in case of the

crooning and groaning which befits this highly emotional age with long drawn-out last notes as unmusical as possible. Meanwhile music, at its best, never had a more adequate hearing than records and the radio have made possible. Would be reformers are much less inclined to paint the horrors of drunkenness and crime. Sermonizers do much less moralizing. All writers and speakers are free to draw on the findings of the analysts and psychiatrists. One's impression when advising people about their ills is that most people would like to "tell all," no longer trying to make what the psychologists call a "flight from reality." The newer knowledge helps us to be sincere and direct, less inclined to adopt any sort of disguise to hide the truths. So, under advice, the scales are off, people draw a long breath and say what they have long wanted to say. In brief, psychology is the best of all means for ridding the world of negations. In the course of time people may be as interested in making goodness worthwhile as they once were in portraying human existence merely as it is in its miseries. Wonderful to relate, goodness could be made interesting—far more interesting than villainy, intrigue, divorce, and double-dealing. When goodness is brought to the fore, freedom and happiness may follow. Then, we may meet one another as children of God.

Negative thoughts—about the body, sex, etc.—more or less bothering people who have been in emotional conflict, are purely incidental, as in case of people emerging from bondage to their early upbringing, overcoming their fears and worries, mastering old inhibitions and other restraints. Then, too, the mind is more or less affected by such thoughts when a person is ceasing to be over-critical of others, less disturbed by inner self-consciousness. Thoughts take their cue from our inward state, which is apt to be very emotional; from our judgments of other people when noting surfaces and appearances only (unrighteous judgments). After a while, we may become enlightened enough to realize that, as a wise man put it, "People do about as well as they

can under the circumstances.” That wise man also said: “If we knew all the circumstances never would we condemn.” Wise words indeed. When these words sink in, we may, indeed, stop being negative. What could we judge by if we were really enlightened? By what a wise man called “the wisdom of the situation.” That discernment is, of course, intuitive. It is not based on the circumstances of the external world, on body, brain, or nerves. It has to do with what is active *within*, in the realm of spiritual states.

Overcoming Worry

The atmosphere or climate of worry is so well known that we may pass at once from description to an important contrast between (1) what is worried about; and (2) worry as a process. Worry usually has a particular objective—one's health, finances, job; one's relation to people in the home; the way present matters are likely to work out or might fail; and dozens of activities apparently so uncertain that apprehension rules the day. This attitude toward the future is a besetting habit with people who have not yet learned the wisdom of living in the present. Others focus their worries on the past with intensive regret, endlessly dwelling on what might have been. In both cases, worry, as a process, is the major factor: a circularity which goes on and on despite any effort to single out a specific trouble for penetrative analysis.

Although people of a nervous or highly emotional type are undoubtedly the greatest worriers, worry as a habit, is not to be identified with any particular type of neurosis. People in all walks of life have their worries whatever their intelligence. Anxieties run through the whole scale of activities from the sources of disturbing emotion, in its most intense form, to the milder anxieties of those who put an over-plus of caution or care into every item of a conscientious character. Intellect is not, then, necessarily protective. Some of the acutest intellectual people worry as much as persons of moderate intelligence. This is, in part, due to the fact that worry is essentially emotional—not something we merely turn over and over as a problem, but as an activity infesting what we think about, getting in its work long after we have put the problem aside. Worry keeps our fears alive. It is inconclusive, refuses to stop. So, it is difficult to put

aside what cannot now be reckoned with, difficult to suppress or forget, and sometimes difficult to pardon. It is likely to run into a cyclical process even though we see the folly of giving way to it. It may be compared to a mill steadily grinding whether or not new grist is supplied. We need knowledge of it both as a process and with respect to matters worried about which we might dissociate from the cyclical movement that keeps it going, sometimes all day and all night.

As a symptom, worry indicates the stage of inner control attained, or the measure of repose or stability attained in confronting impulsiveness and immaturity. Worry, as a process that has become habitual, is the *drive* which urges the activities to keep going, the *compulsion* which, in several cases, seems irresistible. As an “idea,” worry is any part of the subject-matter which entails a sense of insecurity and indicates the need of the understanding which strikes home. What is worried about can be abstracted and dealt with by itself if we have trained the mind to be decisive. We might still carry what the Quakers call a “concern,” but without the disturbing process which interferes if we fail to keep an important issue in its place. Zeal to do what is right, to be of service, and to maintain the right attitude is commendable. But we can keep rightly directed without taking the issues in question ever-seriously. Thus, we can discern the sources of trouble without entering into the trouble as an issue to be distressed about, as indeed, we keep well informed concerning the news of the day without being upset by things we can do nothing about at present. Thus, we may well be on our guard lest depression sets in, lest we unduly emphasize the part we can play when the right time comes. Thus, we may be less emotional and more concerned with factual situations in which we try to discriminate *causes* to be understood and rectified without unduly dwelling on *effects*, like the consequences of war. The more penetrating our knowledge of what people suffer, the more our attention should be directed farther back to conditions to be understood before they can be changed. To single out one issue

at a time, and try to understand it, is far wiser than to be “concerned” in general. Other issues may well be put aside until we have made determinate headway. Men of affairs “table” matters that cannot be taken up at present because of events still in process. It is well to have a halting-place while we catch our breath. Permanent conclusions may still be beyond our reach.

Failure to discriminate between a “concern” calling for immediate action and “jittery feelings” which run on and on, is plain in case of people who lie away mulling over issues that cannot yet be resolved and belong rather in the daytime than at night. Typical worriers begin plans for a journey so late that, when started, they are too “flustered” to enjoy the trip. Most inferiority feelings come under the head of worry. The “little things” are what annoy, to the neglect of many worthwhile matters to which we might well give our attention. Worriers might pray, with the Psalmist, to be put into “a large place.” In short, worry signifies lack of perspective; superficial revolt when we find ourselves in a strange place, amid surroundings which could be understood if we would give ourselves time. Is it so dreadful to be left alone? Is the dark ominous? Must everything be familiar, or should we say with Emerson, that we are ascending “the stairway of surprise?” Familiarity is not necessarily a sign of what is worthwhile. It might indicate, instead, that we are creatures of habit and need to be shaken out of our bondage to circumstance.

Of course, everybody must “take thought for the morrow.” It is anxious thought which the Gospel urges us to avoid. Wise forethought is non-emotional. Hence, it does not borrow trouble, is not weighed down by apprehensiveness. “One step at a time” is frequently the best rule. Well taken, it will lead to the next and the next. Activities already in process are likely to lead on to what needs consideration if we would “keep in line” with the best that has been begun, giving *what is changing* opportunity to advance. We are seldom able to see, while any change

that is working itself out, just what it means and why. Change may mean progress or it may mean the waning of something that is old in order that something new can begin.

It is well, also, to note that worry as a process cannot be stopped on command. As partly a holdover from emotional upheavals of the past, it may be due to the issues that have been evaded, brushed aside or glossed over when its sources should have been brought to light. Or, it is part of a present emotional drive akin to restlessness, a vague nervousness not yet reduced to its meaning.

One admits, of course, that as most people are placed, it is natural to be more or less troubled because of illnesses or other disturbances that might increase. Since we are “human,” what else could be expected? Anxiety arises in proportion to the seriousness of such matters, notably in case of those who are nearest in kin and affection. But we can at least keep from fearing the worst while always ready to be of any possible help, eager to do the best we can under the circumstances. Undue solicitude might incapacitate us for service. Fear is weakness. Courage is strength. Calmness fosters insight. The possibilities of quiet reassurance are very great.

Worry easily breaks in during a long period of waiting when a job is not in sight, and when we are impatient because recovery from illness is slow. But as natural as it may be to worry, its existence as a *process* is evidence of futility in the expenditure of emotion. The process gets us nowhere. At best, it is merely an indication of the point attained in the contest for inner control. Worry is little more than a nervous habit with people who turn to some other object of solicitude as soon as one trouble is overcome. It is important to avoid the notion that a person is of the “worrying kind.” The question is why? How has worry become a habit? What is

to be done to attain stability? If the disturbances in question are allied with a bodily condition not yet overcome, it would be well to discriminate the facts and seek advice in penetrating the trouble to its causes, for worry over symptoms as such is certainly futile. Intense emotions, such as great grief and panicky fright, readily bring worry as an accompaniment. Generally all “mental” nervousness is accentuated by worry, that is to say, nervousness that is not an evidence of disease but is evidence of this or that mental upheaval which should be reckoned with as centrally as possible.

The man who claims he has “lost his nerve,” has actually lost control. Hence, his jittery feelings are to be construed as mental, not as attributable to nerves as such. Very few who use the term “nerve” really say what they mean. Control is deeper, more central; the nervous state coming with it, is a symptom only. Courage is moral (ethical), not a sign of “nerve.” It needs a basis in the inner control which carries a supporting influence over the nervous system as an ally. Hence, we are heartened by the presence of people of sterling character who meet emergencies with quiet confidence and endure suffering with fortitude. The courage which is grounded in our very being is not “lost.” Each new situation calls for readjustment and the way may not, at once, be clear. Because of widespread ignorance concerning what is vaguely called “nerve,” people easily misplace the blame which they cast here and there, meanwhile taking futile remedies to “pep up” and try to regain the control that has been for the time being upset. As no medicine actually renews morale, so none puts a quietus on the worry which comes with weakness. To take a drink to “steady the nerves,” is not to strike at causes. The circularity of worry will still continue although disregarded for the moment. As circular, this process always indicates lack of control. To seek control is to start at a favorable point and move toward a desired end, whereas pepping-up remedies are at random.

Worry is also circular when a person turns issues at stake over and over by merely ruminating instead of thinking, as people do in the kind of daydreaming which merely flits from one imagined episode to another, usually of a sensuous type. What is needed is a new grasp of the issues that need to be resolved by narrowing them to the actual facts and needs of the present. Regressive memories turned and returned, are symptoms of emotive trends that have become habitual by merely dwelling on them without putting them through penetrative analysis. So, once more, it is the circularity of the worry-process which calls for understanding. Worry projected into the future is likely to turn around some imagined event which would have no reality if critically examined. These fancies spring from insecurity. The great corrective is an increasing sense of security due to faith strengthened by habitual acceptance.

Moral worry is said to be worry in its most intensive form. If so, all the more reason for avoiding the process which exaggerates troubles that are mostly fictitious. If a perversion of our life-forces is involved, sound biological knowledge is what is needed. It is natural, not “abnormal,” to be thrown into questioning conflict if we have misused our forces. The conflict is due to the fact that our behavior has run counter to life, is contrary to what we call the higher self. It is apt to be intensified if we have adopted unfortunate views about sin, produced by people who have supposed remedies to sell. Emphasis belongs on the higher selfhood seeking rightful expression, thus, on conscience at its best, on our higher standards. It is profoundly *natural* in the good sense of the word to turn from conflict to its solution in union with the best motivations stirring within us. Clear-cut thinking in terms of conscience is highly desirable: the “right” adhered to as profoundly right, in sharp distinction to what impresses us as *wrong*. Decisiveness brings its reward, as we realize when declaring that no man can serve two masters; that ethical and religious principles stand far above expediency and opportunism; and when

cleaving to the eternal verities in contrast with customs that come and go. Since every instinct or urge in our nature has its rightful place, as we know in case of hunger and the need for rest and sleep, so every admonition from the depth of our nature has its rightful meaning with respect to our welfare as a whole, and it is this meaning which gives the needed clue. We cannot stop the life-stream surging through us. It abounds and moves on despite any effort to control it as if we had created our own powers. Its meaning depends on the stage of development we have attained, as infancy leads to childhood, childhood to youth, youth to maturity, and thus on to the middle years and old age. The pattern or plan is implied in the stages of experience and expression through which we pass as biological beings. Mind tends to keep pace with what nature is doing for us. Spirit has its rhythms of advance also. Well for us if we think and feel with these productive stages of life tending to culminate in the most complete living.

Naturally, we are most nearly satisfied when giving expression to what we can best do, as the musician feels when playing the instrument for which he has been trained, the painter when creating a landscape, the writer when absorbed in the flow of ideas which portray and abiding principle, and the teacher when inculcating truths to responsive persons young or old. Worry is merely a sign when something is not quite right in the flood tide of this expressiveness, as on a day when the painter cannot paint, or when a cloying mood intervenes with the writer's creative urge to write. Unrealized abilities of any sort involve urges that need interpretation according to the transitory feelings which, like the obscurities of a cloudy day, disappear when the sun shines again. The worry which becomes a mood and lasts for hours unless checked, may be compared to the mere talk of people who run on from item to item by sheer remainders, whereas people who have something to say, talk by controlled association, that is, by keeping an interest steadily in mind despite the interventions of people who interrupt. Controlled association, grounded in

habits involving order, system, precision, and the ability to begin at an intelligent point and proceed by connecting inferences, effectively counteracts the side-issues of worry. Since this kind of association of ideas is under regulation, it can be depended on: one can think to advantage by the hour and then *step* by directing the energies elsewhere, in contrast with the worries which turn and return what has recently happened, as if this process of mulling over had any real value. Enough is enough, said the trained mind, that is that. Let the dust settle. Let all emotion cease and with it any tendency to yield to anxiety.

When nothing can be done to help a person in distress, the matter is closed for the time being. Wise sympathy is radically unlike the wish to be helpful if the person who exclaims “I would be eager to be helpful if I only knew.” But when it is not given us to be the wise helper of the moment, we may well wait to see what shall be the next opportunity. To rest the issues in firm faith is to be ready. To drop what cannot now be settled, is to prepare the mind for this oncoming new opportunity, the hour of its coming being at present unknown. Long before nightfall, every intruding “concern” is to be put aside: anxiety in bed is usually the worst.

From the foregoing, it follows that, the better organized the mind, the greater the freedom worries. Hence, such a mind is prepared to meet emergencies. Organization implies wide adjustment according to one’s ability and energy equipment. While the better ordering is in process, some old associations wane solely, others as soon as we detect weakness. Time is required to bring all immaturities to awareness. Since worries are non-rational, never having been due to reasoning activities of any sort, our worries do not evaporate like mist before the morning sun because we see their folly at last. The correctives of worry are gradually acquired: constancy of attitude, stability, inner control, wisdom in adjustment to present conditions by reaching conclusions to depend on; and above all, the faith which gives insight into values and

ideals. Worry as a survival from past tribulations is negative: the correctives are positive, and are acquired by gradually developing a stabilizing attitude.

As most people need a method of daily discipline to foster this constructive development, here are a few suggestions:

On rising, or before getting out of bed, make ready for a good day. Make up your mind that you will have such a day and keep active in the chosen direction. Observe the fact that much depends on the right attitude in starting the day aright for spiritual security. If you give thought to the details of the day in advance, let this be by way of excellent planning, not by turning matters over and over without reaching decisions.

During the day, put your mind on whatever you are doing if you are at work with your hands and, when reading what is worthwhile, writing letters to help people, rearranging a desk or closet, packing to go on a trip, gathering material for an essay, practicing on the piano, singing, or what not, do this one thing at a time as well as it can be done, concentrating on it sufficiently to direct your thoughts so that worries shall not intrude. That finished, take up something else.

When engaged in the activity selected for the time being, do not permit your thoughts to wander to any appreciable extent, as if you should be doing something else or be elsewhere.

Endeavor throughout the day to be objective: paying attention to what is outside, to things and events around you. This is especially important if, in the past, you were inclined to be uncomfortably self-conscious. If you have taken yourself over-seriously, be on the alert for the lighter side of things, for humor, fun, and the joy of living.

Take a walk now and then for a change of scene, preferably in the country or in a park. Keep your mind open and alert to interesting things along the way. Do not rush when you walk.

Seek recreations to take your mind away from self, to give contrast, and to break the monotony of being so much with the same people, doing the identical, sends in the same way. Remember that, as mind functions by association, associations beget habits, and habits may involve ruts or single-tracked modes of thought.

Remember imagination. If you once lapsed into daydreaming, merely letting your mind drift from fancy to fancy, use imagination effectively in some kind of creative work such as planning, writing, designing, composing, doing executive work, or by methods of research in line with a major interest. Read a good imaginative story now and then. Write letters to people to help them solve problems. Use imagination as an ally of sympathy.

If you have not been sleeping well recently, do not trouble over it. Seek reasons for your restlessness, under good advice. Seek correctives to displace worry. Possibly you have slept more hours than you assume. Better sleep will come when you have attained more convictions concerning truths that matter.

Even preparation. Have a change of activity, as already indicated, during the last half-hour before bed-time. Read a story. Play a game. Read a chapter in the Bible, or an essay by Emerson. Or sit in repose for a while, as one does when watching a fire on the hearth. Break with the activities of the day so that you will not carry unsettled matters to bed. Anticipate a good night. Prepare for it by letting your mind settle down in peace, if you must give it any attention at all. The restfulness of the night will depend in part on such preparation.

If your mind is still very active when you drop down on the bed, let your thoughts come and go for a while without seeking to control them. Perchance those thoughts turn upon worrisome issues. The exceptional activity will take care of itself if you do not trouble over it. Do not forcibly try to keep your mind still.

In case you have depended on sedatives, break from this dependence by using your mind as here suggested. You may not see your way to doing this at once. But keep trying and let the old dependence wane. Uplift in spirit to God in whom is your real basis of trust.

Remember that your sometime worry process was evidence of power not yet put to good use. Such a process, because circular, may have been exhausting. Time was lost by it. It was a nervously emotional habit. But it began to disappear with the transfer of your activities from worry to faith which, by contrast, leads on and up, far from a circular mode of activity.

Do you still cross bridges before you reach them? If so, settle thoughtfully into the present as in every way sufficient to enlist your energies. Keep in line with promptings which, when faithfully followed, hour by hour, will lead to the next move. Drop what you cannot decide now. Reach conclusions and advance from point to point, as in passing mile posts along the highway. Do not hesitate at crossroads. Choose a road and see where it leads. That is to say, make use of opportunities at hand and if you do not know the one that is most promising keep on doing what your hands find to do.

Since worry is always secondary, confront what is crucial and primary. Turn as soon as you can to correctives for worry, instead of spending time analyzing what is incidental. Give heed to the process as a survival only long enough to “get its number.” Do not devote much time to the psychology of worry. What is needed is a design for living that gives stability, poise,

composure. Increased control will follow, and with control a closer coordination between mind and brain, mind and habit, the inner life and the outer.

Endnotes

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- ²⁹ W., 209.
- ³⁰ P., 195.
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- ³⁴ M., 186.
- ³⁵ T., 105.
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- ³⁹ A., 10171.
- ⁴⁰ A., 10173.
- ⁴¹ A., 133.
- ⁴² A., 223.
- ⁴³ M., 159. Many other differences are considered, M., 160, foll.
- ⁴⁴ M., 38.
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- ⁴⁶ M., 160.
- ⁴⁷ M., 210.
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- ⁵⁰ M., 209-30.
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- ⁶¹ A., 10181.
- ⁶² A., 5353.
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- ⁷⁰ P., 142.
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- ⁹⁷ L., 31.
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- ¹⁰³ T., 359.
- ¹⁰⁴ A., 1000; P., 316.

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- ¹⁰⁷ P., 308.
- ¹⁰⁸ A., 151.
- ¹⁰⁹ T., 400.
- ¹¹⁰ A., 4007.
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- ¹¹⁵ E., 585,
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- ¹¹⁹ W., 262.
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¹⁴⁸ T., 70.

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¹⁵⁶ P., 277a.

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¹⁵⁸ M., 524.

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²⁵⁹ See A., 4729 for the origin of falsities.

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³³⁴ A.E., 177.

³³⁵ See for example, the table of repeated passages covering hundreds of references in Pott's *Concordance*, VI, 859.

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³³⁸ C. Giles, "Swedenborg as a Theologian," 2.

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³⁴⁴ John Hyde, *Emanuel Swedenborg: A Lecture* (London: James Speirs, 1872), 42.

³⁴⁵ *Numbers*, XXIV, 3, 4.

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³⁴⁸ See John Howard Spalding, *The Kingdom of Heaven as Seen by Swedenborg* (London: J.M. Dent, 1916).

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³⁵⁷ Frank Sewall, Translator's Preface, xv.

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